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EXPLORATIONS OF A NEGLECTED AREA

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Para

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ABSTRACT

This is a work of detection and exploration of some basic issues as a stepping stone towards the undertaking of a fully systematic organization of what is available in terms of knowledge regarding vocabulary in matters of Foreign Language Learning (FLL) / Second Language Acquisition (SLA).

There is an initial survey of the works produced at the Federal University of SC related to topics in connection with that area. In addition to highlight the topics which were treated, this also serves to spot major blank areas and, couppled with a brief gathering of authorized opinions on the crucial role of lexical competence in multiple aspects of the process of FLL/SLA or in bilinguals' communication performance, constitutes a set of reasons for and the initial move of the ensuing research.

Pertinent literature points to a situation of relative neglect in matters of vocabulary. This is found to be associated with inconclusiveness in the theoretical linguistic debate about the relationships involving lexis and grammar. In what FLL/SLA is concerned, a more specific area of neglect is identified around issues of vocabulary knowledge and the ways and means to acquire it. An attempt to lay siege to such a 'neglected area' allows the envisaging of a larger 'field' of interconnected interests which is presented in a considerably unfolded scheme.

Finally, within the elected perspective from a vantage point in learning and aiming at further moves towards the detection and understanding of major features in the process of vocabulary acquisition and its relations to input, the focus is narrowed down to an analysis of the literature on the linguistic and psychological dimensions of FL/L2 lexical proficiency. Further logically related work is also pointed out. This exploration is made possible by the scrutiny of about more than 150 papers which are listed in the bibliography.

RESUMO

Este é um trabalho de identificação e exploração de algumas questões preliminares para favorecer a constituição de um emprendimento de organização e sistematização do que vem sendo feito com relação a vocabulário em Aprendizagem de Língua Estrangeira (ALE) e/ou Aquisição de Segunda Língua (ASL).

Inicialmente, há uma varredura dos trabalhos produzidos na Universidade Federal de SC e que se relacionam a tópicos atinentes àquela área. Além de salientar os pontos tratados, isto serve também para identificar importantes zonas de sombra e, juntamente com uma breve compilação de opiniões abalizadas sobre o papel crucial da competência lexical no processo de ALE/ASL ou no desempenho de comunicação de bilíngües, constitui um conjunto de razões para a pesquisa seguinte e já um primeiro passo dela.

A literatura pertinente aponta para a existência de uma situação de relativo descaso em relação a assuntos de vocabulário. Nota-se que isto está muito relacionado a um estado de inconcludência no debate lingüístico teórico sobre as relações entre vocabulário e gramática. No que se refere a ALE/ASL, uma área de descaso mais específica é identificada em torno de questões de conhecimento de vocabulário e dos modos e meios para adquiri-lo. Um ensaio para tentar cercar tal 'área de descaso' permite vislumbrar um 'campo' de assuntos interconexos maior que é apresentado em um esquema consideravelmente expandido.

Por fim, dentro da perspectiva assumida a partir de um ponto de vista centrado na aprendizagem e visando ulteriores aproximações para identificar e explorar outros componentes de importância no processo de aquisição de vocabulário e sua relação com 'input', o foco é fechado sobre uma análise da literatura sobre as dimensões lingüísticas e psicológicas da proficiência lexical em LE/SL. Também são apontadas possíveis linhas de continuidade da investigação. Este estudo exploratório é baseado no exame de mais de 150 trabalhos que aparecem listados na bibliografia.

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Cai de incógnitas criptas misteriosas
Como as estalactites duma gruta?!

Vem da psicogenética e alta luta
Do feixe de moléculas nervosas,
Que, em desintegrações maravilhosas,
Delibera, e depois, quer e executa!

Vem do encéfalo absconso que a constringe,
Chega em seguida às cordas da laringe,
Tísica, tênue, mínima, raquítica . . .

Quebra a força centrípeta que a amarra,
Mas, de repente, e quase morta, esbarra
No mulambo da língua paralítica!

Eu e Outras Poesias
Augusto dos Anjos

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

My thesis project was born from the fundamental hope of finding means of fostering learning. The idea guiding its original design was that teaching materials presumably influence the learners' undertakings and embody views on learning and language. Schoolbooks, coursebooks, textbooks, whatever their names, these printed materials all share along with other possible sister kinds the fact that they rest on many presuppositions about the learners ('intended reader', 'target audience', 'ideal reader', etc.), language-class discourse, teachers' role, selection of samples of the target language, etc. So the question, or the problem for that matter, was to determine the extent to which such presuppositions did really cope with pertinent findings and views in relevant areas of Linguistics, Psychology, and Applied Linguistics, that might have or actually had some bearing on vocabulary acquisition (cf. Appendix 1). There were some caveats, however.

I understood it would take me a lot of time in researching the literature and making inferences, bridging information from one area to another, etc. That was quite predictable for me, of course. However, since I did not know at the time I submitted the project that vocabulary acquisition was such a problematic area as it is, I had initially also thought that I would, in a reasonably feasible fashion, arrive at a basic set of beliefs or a set of principles that would allow me to lay down not so much as a recipe perhaps, but some sort of a decalogon on those features teaching materials should present to act as potentially useful resources (cf. Ausubel et al, 1978) for the promotion (teaching) or achievement (learning) of vocabulary acquisition in a foreign language. Then, as a second step, I would also take actual materials, particularly those currently being used in my immediate environment, and contrast them with that set of principles. Thus there would be an initial "theoretical research", drawing basically from a wishfully-thought as existent, clearly and overtly stated, presented in detail, and ready to be used, wealth of psychological and linguistic knowledge (in Linguistics, Cognitive Psychology, Psycholinguistics, and Applied Linguistics) from

which a platform --a reasonably consistent amalgam of ideas and findings gathered in the research phase-- would be built and then serve as the firm ground to peer into the materials in order to highlight their authors' overtly stated claims or underlying assumptions that could be inferred from the actual selection and way of rendering the input, their promises and their deeds, their weaknesses and their strengths. Somehow an attempt at a sort of literary-criticism-like work. Criticism of books, anyway; though restricted to only bringing about answers to pedagogical concerns.

Problems began to grow along the process of research as I became much more aware that 1) it was going to take me too much more time than I had first presumed both to identify useful sources of information in these matters and actually get access to and contact with them; 2) many prior scaffolding-like readings were going to be needed in order to override lack of strategic back-up knowledge and terminology, particularly in areas where attempts at well-established broad generalizations and comprehensive presentation of information, in addition to being scarce, still have to face what seems to be the norm --abounding short-ranged proposals and competing models, views, hypotheses, perspectives, approaches, etc.[1]; 3) consequently, it is not always possible to get access to and gather information that fit together so as to allow more straightforward immediate use in a sort of reasonably integrated mosaic, let alone a mini-general theory; 4) or conversely, a matter of strategy, even if the availability of sources of relevant information did allow that integration, since they stem from many areas and different disciplines, such an undertaking would presumably require a general intimacy with the questions at issue whose attainment may require conditions perhaps not possible in the circumstances of the production of a master's degree dissertation; 5) last, but by no means least, a major caveat: a basic assumption had to be challenged in its naivety --it is (not) well-established that a given input *per se*, once known its inherent structural properties, enable the prediction of the sort of (desirable) intake or the amount and kind of learning that will result from it (as if the hope born out of vows of enlightenment had precluded the remembrance of the historic initial failures of Contrastive Analysis), that is, the other side of the coin may detain the major role (or at least

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[1] Theories of SLA --cognitive versus UG, etc.; models of memory, particularly, short-term memory & long-term memory, and then working memory, versus levels of processing; human information processing approach in cognitive psychology; concept-driven, top-down vs. data-driven, bottom-up processing schemes; contextually driven vs. autonomous lexical processing proposals for models of language understanding; serial versus parallel mental processing hypotheses; competing accounts of automatic versus controlled activities and declarative knowledge and procedural knowledge distinction, and the notion of production systems; Parallel Distributed Processing theory and connectionist models of language K and use; not to mention what lies beneath all this: competing underlying models of mind architecture and functioning!; etc.

an equivalent one) in the process of taking in new information, namely the **learner** and his/her individual temporary and or long-lasting characteristics. Therefore, a shift of focus is recommended. However, it might be that the bridge from Psychology to Applied Linguistics perhaps still has to be built here. This time departing from the preferences, dispositions, motives, purposes, needs, age, gender, attitudes & aptitudes, in a word, the learner **type** (cf. Skehan 1989) together with his/her (general) mental processes.

It seems, however, that psychological experiments (and the direct knowledge derived from them) do not always have immediate ecological validity, not only in relation to "real life" outside the laboratory, but also in relation to the classroom setting, which although might itself also be reproached as artificial is, nonetheless, the place where the application of the results and findings of those experiments often is not as direct and problem-free as one could wish.[2] In a parallel way, cognitive psychological and psycholinguistic findings and ideas concerning, for instance, lexical storage and access are an integral part of any model of language use, either comprehension or production, nevertheless, few authors, if any at all [3], would jump from this to the claim that because words, or their meanings for that matter, might be held in memory in networks of similar and related meanings, then antonyms and synonyms should be taught/learnt together at the same time. Maybe when we step into Applied Linguistics things have to be done anew --is it not an auspicious sign of maturity of the discipline? Reshaping and readdressing the questions in its own way?

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[2] Presumably controlled tests are among the ultimate procedures on the ladder towards hypothesis-testing of theoretical constructs like 'vocabulary ability', 'knowledge of vocabulary', 'general language ability', etc. So, tests which are well designed to measure specific constructs may indeed shed a precious light on that specific object and thereby help, on the one hand, theory growth, and on the other the design of instructional proposals for activities and exercises by drawing the attention of practitioners and students (mostly when they themselves are the subjects of the test) to particular aspects of the construct. Studying the means for evaluating [pedagogical] utility of testing outcomes, Chapelle says

> Consequential validity is particularly relevant to the tests used in applied linguistics because of their impacts on classroom settings. Applied linguists, Alderson and Wall (1993), point out, however, that specific consequences of language tests have not been clearly documented and therefore an essential aspect of consequential validity inquiry is to hypothesize the nature and scope of test consequences. (1994: 179) [emphasis added - AEVA]

[3] In this respect, cf. Rivers (1971), where she has suggested, very cautiously, some possible ways of moving from accounts of perception of language to the design of materials for L2 listening comprehension (see also a revised version of this article --"Linguistic and psychological factors in speech perception and their implications for listening and reading materials" in Rivers 1983: 78-91). Again, even in a much more recent paper, Eastman (1991), also in a modest fashion, has tried to base on the particulars of models of NS's language use some proposals of teaching and materials design for the initial stages of learning to understand spoken L2 words.

Very possibly some findings [4] from Cognitive Psychology do lend themselves to immediate integration in studies of learning relationships in classroom-related phenomena. Yet, another big issue, that perhaps due to its very nature of being a fundamental point like those requiring a fully matured decision to get out of a dilemma, would not lend itself to a satisfying account in the present conditions either. It has to do with whether an L2 is acquired through similar processes as those presiding any other knowledge domain, in which case considerable border areas of Psycholinguistics would pass to Cognitive Psychology while losing bonds with Linguistics [5], and then L2 learning could be viewed as just another instance in the application of general learning laws and principles, therefore constituting a case of acquisition of a 'complex cognitive skill' [6], or conversely, whether it asks for the activation of language-peculiar acquisitional devices.

In studies of L1 acquisition, it outstands the existence of various hypotheses of modularity not only in terms of language in relation to other knowledge domains, but also within language itself. There are different language knowledge domains related to the phonological, morphological, syntactic, lexical, and pragmatic systems and each of these has its own pattern of development, peculiar problems, etc.[7] From a similar perspective, grammar and vocabulary are taken as modules that can even be associated with language impairments which selectively may affect one of those, but not either those modules. Psycholinguistic works have pointed to selective impairments in the development of language abilities (Curtiss 1988; Yamada 1988). Either the child presents preserved complex grammar production coupled with disrupted use of the referential component of

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[4] Of course, a more controlled and less impressionistic determination of how many or which of these there are is in itself a question for research. On the other hand, even logics, such a highly artificial discipline, would not benefit from being seen as 'unrelated' to earthly matters, if you want, and many authors adopt 'the view that logical notions are a "destillation" or "refinement" of ordinary language notions' (Cruse 1986: 21, n.11).

[5] Cf. Tanenhaus (1988) where a picture of Psycholinguistics as a swinging discipline is portrayed. In a somewhat like manner, Sharwood Smith (1986) refers to the marriage of psycholinguists with Chomskyan linguistics, their divorce and a subsequent second-time love with a rather changed linguistics.

[6] From this point of view, Anderson's (1982) 'Acquisition of cognitive skill' would very likely provide grounds for a 'cognitive theory of second-language learning' (McLaughlin, 1987). However, a series of works bearing eloquent similarities in their titles --'The acquisition of symbolic skills', 'Acquisition of a memory skill'-- would seemingly not pertain to, as Gardner (1987: 315 ff.) suggests, the same model of architecture of the mind. The former one in particular is clearly associated with the modularity-theoretical tradition.

[7] Catherine Snow's recent work is a case in point here. In January 1993, at the International Congress of Psycholinguistics, held in Florianópolis, she discussed ideas for her 'domain-specific model of development'. Later on, presumably still a work in progress, her model was the object of a paper she delivered at the AILA 10th Congress (cf. *AILA '93 congress guide*).

linguistic knowledge --lexical semantic competence and conceptual memory-- and or its social-communicative components in situational pragmatics, or somewhat symmetrically, troubles in the development of syntax occur side by side with quasi-normal pragmatic behavior and conceptual understanding. These studies may also be paralleled by neurological underpinnings regarding the location of more precise language areas in the brain. It seems that there is a basic distinctive mapping. On the one hand, findings suggest that mental operations associated with vocabulary, for instance, may be located both in the left and right hemispheres of the brain, while the grammar component that operates the linguistic structural computations of phonology, morphology, and syntax would be more strictly dependent on only left hemisphere activity (Curtiss 1988: 87ff ; see also Gardner 1987).

If we believe, as Curtiss does based on Lenneberg's 'critical period hypothesis', that the component of linguistic competence that operates the grammatical computations is the one which is most affected by maturational limitations, in that it may require greater biological plasticity to be brought about (Curtiss 1988: 82), then we could argue that perhaps grammar is the most difficult part in learning an L2 in adulthood years. Vocabulary, pragmatics (including cultural characteristics), etc. would presumably be potentially easier to acquire. Many other researchers would disagree with her, though. Some claim that vocabulary is the most problematic part in advanced stages (Marton 1977), whilst some insist on the sociolinguistic subtleties capable of causing gross disruption of cross-cultural communication (Wolfson 1989: 2ff; 18ff; 23-7; etc.). Cook (1993: 204), who approaches SLA from a UG perspective, sees the bulk of the undertaking as mainly constituted by efforts for the improvement of knowledge of L2 vocabulary.[8]

In addition to the above mentioned problems, other reasons would contribute to a shift to a new direction. In the course of the research to substantiate the ideas that made up the project, I turned to the written products (master degree dissertations) put forward by the program of Pós-graduação de Inglês e Literatura Correspondente of UFSC (henceforth, PGI program). This was done, first of all, as a way of getting acquainted with the common sense accumulated in my near environment in regard to matters related to the study of vocabulary.[9] This way I could notice that not only teaching materials had already received

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[8] In fact, Cook speaks through a text by Chomsky (1989) which reads 'there is only one language, apart from the lexicon, and language acquisition is in essence a matter of determining lexical idiosyncrasies' (p 44).

[9] There was also the presumption that, in a sense, the PGI dissertations could substitute for other possible kinds of "empirical" work, such as experiments, etc., many of which seem to often mostly play the role of bringing down to earth --linking with "our reality in Brazil", that is -- what is going on in the theories we have access to and deal with in the next part of the job. This presumption gained even more prominence

relatively considerable attention in the PGI Program, but also that in a sense they were not as manageable an object as I had first presumed --intrinsic qualities they may have, quite certainly, but whether (and if so, then to what extent) these qualities per se warrant or preclude the achievement of certain pedagogical goals remains yet to be demonstrated. As it was alluded to before, the gap between the structure of the input and the learning eventually obtained is almost axiomatic, as if their relationship could only be a matter for case studies of idiosyncratic learning histories. However it be, enlightenment obliges to proceed! Otherwise, the whole of pedagogical efforts, as the saying goes, would have to be thrown down into the trashcan of History. The quest for effectiveness of means and ways of either introducing knowledge to novices or improving one's own and others' competence can not be senseless.

If the specific concern with materials faded out, it was also because other things seemed to require prior attention. Above all, a clarification of the ideas through an effort to make explicit the assumptions underlying the original project and then by an attempt to find the basic concepts they are related to.

Materials are products that are part of that set of activities whose aim is to prepare the conditions into which actual learning hopefully will eventually take place. Materials design or materials selection, even though they chronologically may precede actual learning, to be of any practical utility they nonetheless need to be based on a more or less clear idea of that learning in the first place. Therefore such learning is logically more fundamental in this respect. So, before dealing with materials and in order to provide grounds for their increased judicious elaboration or analysis, in other words, for the determination of principled guidelines for the evaluation, selection, or design of language materials specifically aimed at VA in a FL, a relatively extensive groundwork very possibly may eventually prove to be convenient. Thus, preliminary issues should clear the way towards the prospective scrutiny of what possibly is one of the most burning questions in AL: VA (vocabulary acquisition processes) & Input (selection and provision of language samples). Prospecting for such a valuable vein, provided it already exists, lying on an accessible stratum, now it is clear to me, is a further work that depends on previous jobs.

Thus, in the manner of a Bandeirante who, after having heard of stories of Spaniards finding gold and silver in the New World, sets out into the jungle, and despite having not found his craved precious metals, eventually leaves behind some trails and clearings on

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as the loss of interest in analysis of materials supervened. Additionally, this reviewing of PGI products would help in improving my notion of dissertation on language matters, since I had come from a different area of undergraduate studies (philosophy).

which churches can be built, I explore V Studies bearing in mind the issue of acquisition and I believe it is worth presenting what I have encountered for the time being, even though there were no such metals on my way. Moreover, there remains also the possibility (one never knows) of discovering ways and means for ultimately fabricating them!

The fundamental pedagogical concern of the original project remains intact and underlies the work. I am approaching the issues from an Applied Linguistics perspective, that is, I have noticed a language-related problem in our institutional environment --a want of vocabulary knowledge-- and I am trying to gather available assets to prepare for the assault.

Furthermore, not only the basic motivation springs from that concern of an applied linguistic nature, but also the major part of the studies reviewed and brought into this thesis have similar origins. Nevertheless, here and there a visit back to psychological and linguistic literature may prove to be convenient.

This exploratory dissertation constitutes an initial effort in organizing pertinent information introductory into a considerably problematic area in language studies which, in addition to having been somewhat neglected, is mostly characterized by a lack of togetherness. It begins with the gathering of reasons for such an applied linguistic undertaking which stems from the survey of what has been done in Brazil (the PGI more specifically) and the various ways by which lexical knowledge is claimed, in the international literature, to be very important in foreign-language learning and bilingual proficiency. This constitutes Chapter 1. An attempt to put the problem of vocabulary in a historical and theoretical perspective follows this initial part and should suggest the transient nature of crucial parts of the knowledge about vocabulary now available. Next, the identification and staking out of a 'field' of vocabulary around concerns with acquisition is ventured from a broad perspective. These parts are in Chapter 2. Next, in Chapter 3, some basic notions in relation to vocabulary knowledge are discussed, particularly lexical competence and lexical proficiency. Finally, in concluding the exploration, while summing up the main issues raised, important 'logical relatives' are pointed out and put in the perspective of a launching pad that hopefully may enable the construction and smooth presentation of a mature theory of VA.

CHAPTER ONE

REASONS FOR THE RESEARCH

In this chapter I initially verify that very little has been done in the PGI Program concerning matters of vocabulary in foreign-language learning. Then, in a second section, I present various points in relation to the importance that is generally attributed to lexical competence, the ultimate goal and the basic motive of any intent related to vocabulary acquisition. Together these two sections make up a set of reasons that justify an applied linguistic work to organize knowledge in the area of vocabulary aiming at preparing the theming of the process of acquisition and its relations with input.

1.1 - A subject matter little explored

Very few studies, if any indeed, in our immediate institutional environment have addressed issues of vocabulary with a clear focus on the process of acquisition. As yet the number of theses put forward by the PGI program during its two-decade existence amounts

to around a hundred titles.[1] Most of them deal with literary subjects. It seems, however, that a reversed tendency has started to prevail in the second decade. Whatever the reason for this clear shift of interest, it certainly was not enough to alter the panorama to favor lexical studies in spite of the availability of language and applied linguistics advisors.

Despite the significant (about three times as many) and significative increase in the studies of language and applied linguistics as compared to literature during the 1980s, none of the titles in the list of works produced indicates any explicit connection with the subject of vocabulary acquisitional process. However, since some of them, or important parts of some of them, revealed to fall into the vicinity of that topic, I will make a brief review of their most pertinent aspects (as far as that subject is concerned) while occasionally profiting to highlight relevant aspects that point to vocabulary studies. This review may also bring to focus some characteristics which are not at all idiosyncratic of the PGI culture, but illustratively mirror parallel tendencies in the world at large (we shall see further below in Chapter 2 that a neglect towards issues of vocabulary acquisition is a characteristic of this period of AL research).

In this survey I have picked the dissertations whose titles or tables of contents indicated or suggested some relationship with matters of vocabulary and FLL/SLA (foreign-language learning/second-language acquisition). Broadly, I will be looking at the occurrence of any possible concern with lexical competence and the ways and means to get to it.

A reasonable number of dissertations have dealt with topics somehow related either to lexical matters or to SLA [2], or even both. The list begins with Machado Filha (1977). She is concerned with the errors Brazilians make in the usage of articles in English and studies these errors as constrained by various linguistic factors, particularly the different co-occurrence restrictions to associations of articles with five classes of nouns in the two languages as determined by five types of reference these nouns are used to make. This way she contrasts English and Portuguese possibilities in the combination of both number and

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1 When, in early 1992, I began this particular part of my research in the Setor de Santa Catarina, a division of the UFSC Central Library that is specialized in material produced in the State of Santa Catarina, there were less than a hundred PGI titles available. A new catalog issued by the PGI early in 1993 now lists 109 titles.

2 I am assigning throughout this section a broad meaning to this acronym so as to include in it, besides FLL, foreign-language teaching subjects as well. This might look arbitrary, but is it not true that FL Teaching can only make sense if there are actual learners who are engaged in learning? So the final point has necessarily to do with learning. Certainly the processes in teaching and learning may be focused on from different points of view and constitute the object of separate areas of work. Here, however, for our immediate purposes, it seems harmless to integrate them into a single label. Similarly, Krashen's distinction 'learning'/'acquisition' is not being taken into account.

definiteness with the generic, specific, and situational types of reference of common nouns (concrete count, concrete mass, abstract count, abstract mass), or unique reference, which only applies to proper nouns, or still anaphoric or cataphoric linguistic reference possible with both common and proper nouns.

Machado Filha faces the problems associated with the limitations of Contrastive Analysis and rejects the strong predictive claims of the early versions, particularly Lado's *one --presumed single source of errors (in fact many errors are not caused by interference of the native language only); pedagogical inadequacy for classes with students from different* background in terms of their native languages; prediction of errors the students will not necessarily make; etc. Despite its not yet surmountable lack of practicalities for the identification of the sources of learners' errors, she decides to adopt a more realistic Error Analysis approach while maintaining a contrastive linguistics perspective. By doing that she can take a more inquisitive stance towards learners' errors and consider them as a valuable means for the study of the students' learning processes and strategies underlying their approach to learn the new language.

In spite of such analyses and precautions, her interest in article usage eventually culminates in a statistics-based demonstration of the greater usefulness of EA over CA. She does not really try to peer into the learners' acquisitional processes any further than look at their outputs to distinguish native language interference from other possible error-causing factors. In addition, she concentrates on a particular set of words --articles-- which is already taken from a closed set of items --functors, that is, words that play a role much more grammatical than properly referential or expressive.

In connection with her emphasis on the constraints imposed by the types of reference on the usage of that particular set of determiners, it goes without saying that to correctly sort out the proper article, the learners/speakers have to already possess not only a reasonable store of words, content words, that is, but also a clear idea of the different (and possibly contrasting) class distribution the nouns may assume in the language they are using (for instance, 'information', 'research' are uncountable in English, while 'informação[ões]', 'pesquisa[s]' are countable in Portuguese). So, prior to any decision concerning the selection of an article, which in itself may also be a part of lexical competence, the speakers have to determine what class of noun they are dealing with and what they intend to do with it. Quite a lot of lexical knowledge needs to be already stored. We could also raise the question of whether, and if so, how, to what extent, and when, the selection of proper grammatical words depends on previously chosen lexical words or content words, or vice versa, that is, what are the relationships among the usage constraints mutually affecting lexical and grammatical choices in language use.

Article usage *per se* is part of lexical competence even though it serves more to mark grammatical functions rather than lexical ones proper. So the problems she tackles strongly suggest the cruciality of lexical knowledge, not only in relation to her specific object, that is, a closed set of items --functors or grammatical words which nonetheless presumably occupy entries in the mental lexicon-- and their relationships with their essential collocates -- nouns, but also in terms of the constraints that are put onto grammar by content words. Put another way, their relationships with priorities either attributed to matters of syntax, or semantics.

Next on the PGI list, Léffa (1979), whose work is entitled A study on the teaching of English for reading purposes in the Secondary School, has aimed at devising for his target population --the students in the public school system of RGS-- a program of English which could be effective enough to fit in curriculum schedules alloting at best a maximum of 180 hours for the study of a Foreign Language. After having considered throughout history the controversy involving language teaching methods that have emphasized either an aural-oral approach or a reading approach to foreign languages, he concludes that no one method yet can do all in the plasmation of learners' skills. Moreover, when carefully contrasted with the learners' conditions, the alleged intrinsic values of these methods should be downgraded. Therefore, when the conditions of his presumed students, such as their probable future needs (predominantly to get information from written materials), age (adolescence, that is, after literacy in the mother tongue has already taken place), and time available (180 hours) are taken into account, the choice for a reading approach and the prescription of a program designed just to concentrate on building basic reading competence may be justified in a principled fashion.

In addition, given the presumed learners' conditions, a reading approach may also bear a series of advantageous characteristics not only 1) linguistically and 2) psychologically, but also of a 3) pedagogical and 4) administrative nature. Different from the spoken word, as for (1) the written language makes it easier to discriminate and analyse its units, has a more limited repertoire of structure patterns particularly in its scientific modality, presents less geographical and social variation, gives access to a huge amount of printed information; as for (2) it is taken in through the eyes which seems to be more effective in terms of language learning time demand; as for (3) it requires less rote repetition and allows the concentration on more elaborate kinds of behavior (predicting, or raising and testing hypotheses), lends itself more properly both to student-centered activities (group work or individualized instruction) and tangible forms of evaluation; and as for (4) it

involves less mediation on the part of the teacher between the TL and the learner thus reducing teaching costs, etc.

Compared to some estimates that claim an average student would take about 1000 to 1200 hours to get minimum proficiency in the four skills --listening, speaking, reading, writing (Diller, 1971: 103), it is clear that efficiency rises if we postpone or even dismiss productive skills: it is easier to acquire in an equal period of time a recognition body of language of 1000 words, than 500 words of active language knowledge (Dixon, 1960: 61). In accordance to all the above and additionally, Léffa's proposal requires no previous knowledge of the target language, much less reliance on the teacher and much more on materials, and is intended to lead the learner further into an interlanguage position from which he or she could succeed in reading not only simplified materials up to the 2000-word level, but also some kinds of unmodified texts at the high school level.

Basically his proposition consists of two parts, both of which are backed up by authoritative literature. On the one hand, there is a set of language items whose potential 'recognizability' he tested by checking out its indispensably overwhelming presence (above 97.5%, that is, a ratio of only a new item for every fourty running words at least has to obtain; cf. Bright & McGregor 1970: 20) in some of the different sorts of materials the learner might eventually be faced with after undergoing the program: American and British controlled readers, authentic scientific texts of the kind found in high-school level encyclopedias, and Brazilian 'Supletivo' and 'Vestibular' reading examination materials. And, on the other hand, suggested teaching strategies coupled with activities to present that body of language.

As to the first part, a two-fold 3,262-entry English word-list (1719 non-cognates, affixes, idioms and structural words, and 1543 cognates) was judiciously selected from established American and British studies according to their frequency of occurrence both in general written texts (Thorndike, 1931; Barnard, 1971) and in scientific language (Ewer & Latorre, 1969), and degree of coverage, that is, their possibility of replacing other items with similar meanings (Ogden, 1943). West's (1953) list for general service was also resorted to in order to complement these sources.

Fifty English structure patterns which differ from their corresponding forms in Portuguese were also gathered from available inventories (Hornby, 1961; etc) and arranged by difficulty --the greater the number of differences, the greater the presumed difficulty (similar patterns in the two languages were left out for they would not need teaching in a program for comprehension purposes). Together with the vocabulary list it constitutes the selection designed to be mastered on a recognition basis as a scaffolding for basic extraction-of-information tasks only.

In connection with the second part, a list of strategies for the presentation of this sample is also suggested as well as a series of possible activities and techniques allowing for either classroom or individualized instruction. Basically, there are three sets of these. First, pre-reading activities in which are given the phonetic transcription of each new word on a regular basis, while occasionally its translation may also be given if the word does not lend its meaning to easy guessing from context. There is also a concern in presenting structure patterns in a controlled way by attending to their degree of difficulty, so that overloading the learner be prevented.

Second, reading as a set of gradually preparatory activities leading to real reading. Their focus is on the improvement of (a) predicting and (b) inferring. In (a) (after Smith, 1971) the learner should be trained in making the mind hypothesize possible up-coming information which could follow the words already identified and request the eyes to confirm or disconfirm the prediction made while keeping a string of words in short-term memory. In (b), guessing the meaning from context is aimed at by profiting from previous knowledge -- cognates, other words already known, and familiar topics (Days of the Week, Food and Meals, The Classroom, The Body, The Weather, etc). It is assumed that in principle any topic interesting to the student may be embodied in a text receiving an assortment of the target vocabulary and structures.

Third, follow-up exercises designed either to refer the learners back to the text or to have them work on the language by dealing with a topic related to the passage. Only short answers should be required from them, provided that they be engaged in problem solving decisions, judging, deducing, remembering facts, etc.

Léffa puts forward a basic reading course proposal, but maybe his irreproachably qualified work of about three dozens of thousands of words in length (well above the PGI average of around a couple of dozens) is exemplar of studies in connection with vocabulary issues (on this issue, cf. page 44). He also refers in the Bibliography to 159 titles. It is quite a lot. Not withstanding all this, he explicitly acknowledges that the end product has limitations, particularly regarding the proof of the pudding, for he has mainly substantiated the ingredients and what to do with them, and though he shows concern with the learner, his clearly stated objectives overlap specifically teaching in its broadest sense (that is, it has to do with what has to be there prior to the **presentation of input** proper). Still, we could claim that his work is somewhat more restricted and could be included without any downgrading whatsoever into narrower categories, mostly in what could be called '**preparation of input**' ('**selection of input**' and the recommendation that it be handled with care, but not 'presentation of input' proper --cf. pp. 63-4), for, perhaps due to some silently

active remnants of the long behaviorism sovereignty, the inherent glory of the input could still be reverberating.

Great importance is attributed to vocabulary knowledge in this work. In spite of this concern, however, Léffa works basically on the **what to teach ('preparation of input')** and **how to present the selected provision of the target language** (prescriptions for the **'presentation of input'**). He does not quite traverse that which will be called the 'neglected area' of FLL, however (see discussion below in Chapter 2).

Assis (1980), though not working exactly with FLL, is nevertheless involved with lexis and concerned with the problems in the **usage of adjectives** she has noticed in Brazilian learners of English. As her object, she takes adjectivals, that is, besides adjectives proper, those verb forms and nouns that play the role of adjectives in prenominal strings of words not broken by and, but, or, and commas, intonational contrasts, or pauses, for instance: 'The decorated young black American army officer', in opposition to the many other conceivable combinations of these same seven words, since such combinations would either be merely ungrammatical (which constitutes her point), or (it could be added) would apply only to different referents with different qualities, or other possible contexts, or still would not be possible (make sense) in this world as we know it. Her main objective, however, is related to English syntax as manifested in word order. Intrinsically, hers is not a thesis in the area of applied linguistics, rather of **descriptive linguistics.** [3]

Also involved with lexis is Freitas Oliveira (1981). She contrasts Portuguese and English verb forms in order to explore the different past temporal meaning configurations onto which they are mapped. It is typically a work in **Contrastive Analysis** devoted to the study of lexical meaning, but with no regard to more immediate problems of FLL.

The next title from the PGI list, An analysis of errors of Brazilians in the placement of English word stress by Baptista (1981), brings us to the difficulties that advanced Brazilian foreign learners of English have in determining which syllable in a word is to stand out among the others as well as a proposition of what to do in teaching them. A subject in connection with both lexis and FLL.

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[3] Even so she has no comments for such written (lexical? orthographic? grammatical? morphological?) possibilities of achieving semantic distinctions as 'personal computer factory' as against 'personal-computer factory'. In fact, they could be rendered through intonational contrast in the spoken language counterpart, though.

Baptista's dissertation is very ingeniously made and backed up by an agile review of intricate and extensive literature. Moreover, possibly partly due to her condition of being a native speaker and therefore more freed from linguistic grappling, her several dozens of thousand words long text embodies a well-integrated, solidlike structure. [4]

Baptista departs from pedagogical purposes and approaches the literature in search of guidelines for dealing with the learners' problems. Not having found enough and useful agreed-upon and conclusive knowledge in the theoretical linguistic literature and, on the practical side of the coin, not being satisfied with the idea of her learners having to memorize the stress configuration of each word individually, as if it were a matter of pure idiosyncrasy, inspired by applied linguists, she sets out to do her own study. She examines a group of native speakers of English to gather the **rules** they usually apply to stress a syllable when pronouncing specific types of as-if-unknown words (non-words). Sixteen rules which appeared correctly in 70% of the chances or more in the native informants' responses, and this way reached the criterion of pedagogical usefulness, were selected to integrate a test for Brazilians. This test was then applied to a group of undergraduates and graduates of the UFSC "Letras" course who had to pronounce unknown English words whose patterns were accounted for by those rules. Next, through a compromise of Contrastive Analysis and Error Analysis she detects the strategies to assign stress placement to unknown items that Brazilians adopt either driven by interference of their native language or owing to overgeneralization of the target language. Some of these strategies may substitute for some of the rules without causing errors, but others will interfere with rule-following behavior, impede rule stability, and, even worse, disrupt the perception of a pattern, therefore precluding the learning of the corresponding rule. Thus she recovers predictability and builds a hierarchy of rules according to their potential difficulty for advanced learners.

In order to implement the pedagogical application of her set of rules, Baptista seeks more guidelines in the literature. What she encounters, however, constitutes characteristically a neglected area. Indeed she finds very little about word stress in the literature not only of general language teaching methodology, but also in more specific works of English teaching methodology. She turns to general English textbooks and to pronunciation practice manuals as well and finds a similar desolate panorama. Moreover, even the very few works concerned with the issue still have many weaknesses. A flaw she is

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[4] Interestingly enough, it is not only as if she were spared of having to fight against L1 interference menaces of all sorts, but also that sometimes she conversely seems to 'stretch' her native English to the limit so as to bring it the closest possible to her second-language Portuguese, the mother tongue of her students.

particularly concerned with is the abrupt start with production practices which afford no opportunities for the learners to exercise focusing on basic perception of stress.

No reasons for her to stop, though. She already has laboriously achieved her set of useful rules; now what is missing is just a good theory of language learning and teaching. Convinced again that the wiser decision is to stand in middle position, she faces the mentalism/behaviorism controversy about what language knowledge is and how it is acquired. Is it a **set of habits** formed by immediately reinforced responses to stimuli, a lot of repetition, avoidance of errors (aversive consequences of given responses?), and analogy making? Or is it an internalized **system of rules** constructed via hypothesis formation, hypothesis checking, and necessary going through errors after experiencing exposure to sufficient input (how much of it? of what kind? good? intensive? extensive? 'comprehensible'/'i + 1'?). Baptista finds her way out of the dilemma backed up by Levelt's (1978) '"human performance theory" of skills and attention' (1981: 122). Language performance is a complex task consisting of a "variety of operations in accurate temporal integration" (1978: 54; cited in 1981: 122). Among these are operations such as creation of plans, most of which should preferably be ready-to-use in long-term memory [5], since the acquisition of skills (as well as performance in the completion of tasks) greatly depend on the achievement of automation of lower level plans --phonological choices included-- so as to free attention to be focused on the upper-level decisions.

Baptista equates such lower-level plans automation [6] to a somewhat redeemed habit formation of behaviorism (1981: 123) and recommends that plans, but not "terminal" activities, receive mechanical repetition treatment. Meaningfulness can be postponed to a later stage after the learners have attended solely to form. The problem, then, she concedes, is to ensure that the learners will eventually transfer the knowledge acquired in drills to their production of spontaneous speech (127). Similarly, by bridging learning or teaching theoretical points down to more concrete levels of teaching practice, she had already tackled another dilemma : 'to use the rules only to organize the language data in such a fashion as to allow the student to form his own hypothesis' (125) or to resort to direct teaching of the rules. Still another compromise, one we could call 'show and tell': both controlled language

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[5] Baptista reminds us of her awareness that this conflicts with the transfomational generative design of language knowledge and corresponding model of language use in which it is preferable to liberate memory from the burdening storage of large amounts of items, because it is believed to be more efficient to follow a series of computations to generate items anew. However, she herself is particularly interested in rule-learning in opposition to simple memorization.

[6] More on the hierarchy of plans, cf. bellow on pp. 25-6.

and isolated decontextualized rules.[7] She also engages into a discussion of possible interference of the written media on the initial learning of stress rules, because of the differences in pronunciation that speaking brings about, but emphasizes that 'one of the objectives of word-stress training is to enable a student to pronounce correctly, without referring to a dictionary, many new words which he comes across in his reading.' (128)

After building a theoretical and pedagogical platform geared towards rule-learning, she develops a principled plan for the teaching of word stress to fit in the early phases in the syllabus grid of the UFSC "Letras" course: sequencing of activities giving precedence to perception over production; order of presentation of the rules; criteria for the selection of target words from the list of intended active vocabulary that the learner has to use in oral practice of the lessons; basic amount of different words per rule so as to allow generalization --eight items in the first systematic presentations or around twenty to thirty ones in more natural kinds of exposure; potential productivity of a rule, that is, the possible number of words it can be applied to or used to predict the placement of stress; potential learnability of a rule by native speakers of Brazilian Portuguese; etc. Should the regular program fail, or due to any reason change, remedial guidelines or alternatives to adapt it to different curricula are also included.

Let me bring in still another point for a compromise which was not put in explicit terms and which I think certainly does neither violate nor conflict with her work: without a system of rules for the pronunciation of new words linguistic competence might be impossible --at least as far as it relates to listening and speaking -- but conversely rule application in lower-level plans is to be surpassed if, complying to Levelt's observations, automation is to be achieved. Thus, it seems to be a convenience to have word stress, as the name itself suggests, as an integral part of a 'ready-to-use' lexical entry inscribed in the student's mental lexicon in order to assign or guarantee feasibility in performance. Conversely, the possession of a good set of rules for the pronunciation of words certainly is

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[7] If we believe with Krashen that that knowledge about the language which is gained through explicit 'learning' of rules will not turn into an 'acquired' asset of linguistic competence available for use in communication, then we might count on this to get out the dilemma. But if, on the other hand, we would like to see a comprehensive science of learning to account for matters of language acquisition that could dispense with any argument of modularity, then the issue would undergo a different postulating, I presume. Seemingly, those scholars working with linguistics-based assumptions of modular systems still outnumber the people with a more psychological orientation who might still lack sufficient critical knowledge of language and language acquisition matters in order to definitely subsume these under a single theory of acquisition of knowledge and ability. Anyway, certainly it seems counterproductive to adopt a sort of division of labor that would segregate under Applied Linguistics those more knowledgeable in linguistic areas and under Psycholinguistics people with interest in mind processes and contents.

a fundamental asset in the undertaking of vocabulary acquisition (particularly from written media) right from the start in order to avoid the need of future unlearning. But we have to be careful, again, not to become stuck in another sort of egg-or-chicken problem, for rule-learning depends beforehand on the internalization of a certain unavoidable minimum base of vocabulary items which obviously have to be merely 'acquired' through bare 'imitation' without any specific analytic focus whatsoever. Early correct language does not need to ensue rule-following. Does not the literature tell us that very young native speakers of English begin by saying 'went', 'came', before trying their rule-playing phase with oddities like 'goed', 'comed', etc.? Again, what do foreigners do with whole salient sentences, routines, formulas, frequent phrases and even words that are at first perceived and stored as unanalysed chunks of language?

Apart from the numerous delicacies we are presented to, stress placement, it is worth noticing, is just a part of pronunciation, which in itself does not embrace all the phonological knowledge involved in linguistic competence. However important a component of one of the basic dimensions of lexical competence (see pp. 82) word stress might be, the bulk of Baptista's paper mainly focuses explicitly on direct matters of teaching phonological knowledge. She very clearly traces a line around them, and lexical knowledge and vocabulary acquisition remain on the outside, they are not at issue. She also directs her attention to the learners, mainly to the strategies with which they get by, and has touched issues of performance and acquisition of skills, but to say that she is mostly concerned with the **efficiency of teaching** is not to misinterpret the core of her work.

Proceeding on the list of available PGI studies, we get to Souza's (1982) work in which learners' reading ability and FL teaching are related. She conceives of reading as basically a process of general transfer of stored knowledge, so she aims at the assessment of a principled selection of mother tongue reading abilities of freshmen students at UFSC as a possible means of predicting areas of difficulty in dealing with the inevitable academic reading of foreign-language texts, thus shedding some light on aspects deserving teachers' attention. Though the author presupposes vocabulary knowledge and vocabulary skills as an integral part of the comprehension-component abilities she tested, the pursuit of any interrelationships does not specifically integrate her purposes, neither does their learning as such.

One thesis that, besides being directed explicitly towards language learning, is inaugural of a series of works concerned with the communicative abilities [8] of learners of foreign languages, is Vera Bazzo's (1983) The effects of exploratory speech in the learning of languages: An experiment in a secondary school. It also marks a turning point, in 1983, when the studies of language and applied linguistics began to gain predominance over those of literature in the history of the PGI program. Centrally involved with FLL, Bazzo's work presents both a criticism of 'traditional' classroom discourse patterns, which are based on the transmission of knowledge by the teacher, and a proposal for a change to learner-centered activities. This way the learners may initiate interactions and collectively explore the lesson content presented by the teacher thus affording themselves genuine situations in which they might feel the pressure to make creative use of their linguistic assets. Such a shift of direction is shown to promote the learners' more fruitful learning and the development of communication strategies, self-confidence, and the formation and testing of hypotheses by actively making use of their previous experience. The focus in class is moved to fluency first, and only then to accuracy. The new order is from use to usage, from communication to grammar, from meaning to form.

As far as it relates to words in FLL, one of the most insteresting aspects of Bazzo's study is precisely the vivid picture it provides of the importance assumed by vocabulary as

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[8] Along the following pages, many times I refer to 'communicative competence'. Maybe some points in relation to this should be made here.

In the recent history of language teaching, people began to be concerned with the 'communicative incompetence' many a learner so strikingly used to show after having succeeded in passing through many tests in which he/she demonstrated considerable 'structural' knowledge of the language. How could it be that such learners, comparatively so knowledgeable, performed so poorly in situations of real communication, people asked themselves.

Concurrently, outstanding linguists proposed 'linguistic competence' as the major object for the science of language. Such phrase referred to the kind of knowledge that allows a speaker to comprehend and produce grammatical sentences of a language: 'I am going back tomorrow'; 'I will go back tomorrow'; 'I will be going back tomorrow'; but not 'I will going back tomorrow', nor 'I am go back tomorrow' which are ungrammatical. However, those with strong sociological concerns, and ethnographic ones, for that matter, did not accept this narrowed view of language and proclaimed that the phenomena dependent on the social and functional circumstances in which language is put to use should also be an integral part of the science of language (cf. the distinction between 'microlinguistics' and 'macrolinguistics', by James 1980: pp 61 ff; 98 ff). Thus, a more comprehensive concept was proposed to substitute for linguistic competence and was labelled 'communicative competence' (a label put forward by the American ethnologist Dell Hymes, 1972). Now, 'linguistic competence', that is, the knowledge of grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary, was but a part of a broader competence which also included dimensions relative to the use that a speaker makes of that linguistic knowledge according to the different things he/she intends to do with the language (pragmatic competence) and how he/she threads language strings in varying social circumstances of interaction with people of different social status, sex, age, etc. (sociolinguistic competence and discourse competence).

soon as the methodological guidelines are reversed. When the learners are to play a more active role in the learning situation and to develop the class content mostly by themselves, they can not avoid facing the problem of lack of words.

Bazzo (1983) shows us how interesting and involving language classes can be, and the consequences the change may bring to learners' development. The attentive, detailed, sympathetic portrait of the learners in action, was not intended to explicitly peer into their 'black boxes', though. So, regardless her absolutely convincing and clear demonstration , the focus of the work does not embrace the 'learning processes', rather it casts light mostly on the **conditions** that favor better learning. And, in so doing, she teams up with those we could call, based on Meara (1980), 'managers of learning' in opposition to those more specifically concerned with the learner's acquisitional processes in the 'psychology of foreign-language learning' (Meara 1978: 194; 1980: 221). (See further on Ch. 2 a discussion of this issue).

Fernandes (1983) researches the level of communicative competence regarding listening and speaking skills of last phase English Language university students who professed the intention of becoming teachers of English. These students were given tests in order to reveal their communication abilities. The tests required them 1)to discuss a topic with a native speaker during four minutes; 2)to interview a native speaker to get as much information about her as it could be possible in a four-minute period of time; 3)to report on a topic in English (three minutes) after having prepared it in Portuguese for one minute; and 4)to describe an actor and the ongoing activities been performed by him during the usual four-minute period of time. Thus, both listening comprehension (1 and 2) and oral production were tapped. Whenever the meaning conveyance was not affected, the linguistic errors in the subjects' performance were disregarded. For the evaluation, a series of six-point scales was applied in order to measure features considered to take part in communicative success --effort to communicate, amount of communication, comprehensibility, etc.-- as well as the skills of pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary, while the skill of fluency was measured against a scale of five points.

The six guidelines for vocabulary were based on ARELS Examination Trust (1978). Here they are:

0 - unintelligible
1 - extremely elementary
2 - elementary and repetitive
3 - fair control
4 - varied and appropriate

5 - good control, variety in range and style (p. 57)

Unfortunately, Fernandes' study did not aim at a discussion of the many conceptual aspects of vocabulary proficiency that the scale weighs. Some of which are not so easily grasped on an intuitive basis, and have remained untouched, however. For instance, what is 'elementary vocabulary'? And what is 'repetitive vocabulary'? Is it one which comprises too many tokens of very few types? Or does it refer to too many derived forms from a very(?) small set of base forms? to homographic forms? to polysemous words? After all, what is being counted as a lexical item? And what about 'control', 'range'? It seems that this scale could somehow be positioned in between, on the one hand, pronunciation, and fluency on the other. Thus, intelligibility would be related to good pronunciation, whilst control to automaticity and therefore to fluency. This is not clearly stated, but it seems to be suggested a few paragraphs later:

> These four skills were evaluated because they are related to the communicative skills tested. After all, difficulties to communicate can lead the student to express within a narrow range of vocabulary and inadequate grammar can disturb communication and affect meaning although there is no penalty for linguistic errors. If the speakers pronunciation is unintelligible and after every second word he pauses and makes many hesitations, the listener just might give up listening. The four skills of pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary and fluency therefore are essential to communication. (p. 58)

Fundamentally interested in communicative competence to which she has dedicated a large theoretical chapter, Fernandes takes a historical perspective and adopts the Hymesian concept thus incorporating grammatical competence, or linguistic competence, into it. But an exploration of the role of grammar and vocabulary in such a broader framework is not within the scope of her work. It certainly would have been quite interesting, however, to see an extended discussion of some points which seem to be taken for granted. For instance, 'communicative difficulties' (are they due to lack of knowledge or lack of ability to deal with the topic? the interlocutor(s)? the sociocultural situation? the threading of discourse?) are said to determine linguistic performance, as far as vocabulary is concerned at least, by 'bottlenecking' the expression (meaning conveyance included?) into a narrow range (a small set of items which has to help the speaker to make do with it in a large variety of contexts, or a small set of contexts in which a few items repeatedly reappear in?). On the other hand, grammar inadequacies (wrong word order? absence of any grammatical role filler? or

what?) are said to have the power both of disturbing communication and affecting meaning. True, but what about the reverse way? Is it not also possible? And why is it so? Is it due to performance problems? fatigue? stress? strategic memory limitations? Would it be the case that the lack of lexical competence does not also influence communication ease? Is it possible that communication difficulties do not affect grammatical performance? What are the relationships the skills play in this framework? How do pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and fluency relate to each other and to communicative competence as a whole? How can we know the students indeed have or, conversely, lack the knowledge that for some reason they fail to show?

Fernandes aimed mainly at the **testing** of competence, and clearly not any detailed and explicit conceptual analysis of vocabulary knowledge and acquisition whatsoever. Her subjects generally achieved low scores in the tests and she eventually established that the communicative competence of prospective teachers of English from five universities along the coastline of S. Catarina was in need of great improvement.

Similarly to Bazzo and Fernandes, Quintanilha (1983) too is interested in the communicative competence of language students. Aiming at the improvement of their oral fluency, she is especially concerned with the analysis, selection, and design of teaching materials. If the pedagogical process is to be centered on the learner, as Bazzo has already shown to be not only desirable but also feasible, then it is necessary to focus primarily on the learners characteristics, interests, and needs, as well as their strengths and weaknesses in terms of linguistic proficiency, self-expression and interactional abilities. Paying attention to the learners' ID is mandatory in her approach to fluency.

From this base emerge the criteria not only to select topics (which should be interesting and related to the learners reality), but also to arrange for variation in the units format, and to provide stimulating types of activities and exercises, all of which eventually have to fit into the syllabus as a whole. In the case of UFSC, to whose course of English Quintanilha proposes an alternative material, the curriculum is divided into three stages according to the scheme: 1 (1.1; 1.2; 1.3), 2 (2.1; 2.2; 2.3), and 3 (3.1; 3.2). The initial one comprises three phases and is dedicated to offer the learners a good exposure to the target language and is biased towards receptive skills. The last one, which has two phases, is intended to consolidate accuracy and appropriateness after fluency has been tackled in a three-phase intermediate stage. Upon entering this second stage, students are expected to have accumulated 'a considerable amount of vocabulary and general knowledge of the basic structures' (p. 17) from their previous intensive reading and listening activities.

Bazzo rejected the traditionally prevailing methodology in language teaching courses, the teacher-dominated ready-made character of classes, in which the learners had (have?) but little chance to become real agents in the process. Likewise, Quintanilha rejects traditional materials, which are closed into themselves, made abroad, far from the typical reality of Brazilian learners, not to mention their possibly unavoidable inherent disregard of other learners' individual differences. According to her, an alternative sort of materials should allow the learners adequate conditions to follow their own route in learning by facilitating their genuine negotiation of the conceptual and linguistic content in the lessons (p. 28) instead of being too prescriptive so as to impose controlled language (vocabulary frequency lists, etc.) (p. 35) on the learners. Since fluency is brought about in the creative, open-ended, unpredictable use of language and there is no justification to select sequences of controlled language beforehand, based either on criteria of 'difficulty' or those of 'frequency' and 'utility' (p. 98), then materials should be taken, in a non-directive manner, as learning resources at the disposal of the actual participants in the teaching-learning situation (p. 68). If the focus is to shift from form to meaning, materials should give a chance for the learner to move his/her attention from the linguistic medium towards the message he/she is about to convey (p. 94). This objective can be attained when the learner is involved with proper activities, which require him/her to interchange previous knowledge with other participants in the task, such as problem-solving, bridging information gaps, etc. In doing so the learners themselves become responsible for the main contribution to their own learning and get an awareness of their specific needs and available assets.

As we can see, apart from the **procedural improvement** of the students towards general oral productive fluency which is to count on a necessarily previously given base of vocabulary and grammar knowledge, the bulk of the remaining aspects of their vocabulary acquisition is assigned to other parts of the curriculum, and therefore is not within the scope of the work Quintanilha is involved in.

Like Léffa, Araújo (1983) stands out among those who, for various reasons, have dealt with more immediately interrelated aspects of FLL and lexis. Her work is possibly the only one to step into an area of interest more closely related to the theme of vocabulary knowledge and acquisition. Error Analysis in foreign language teaching: A study of English prepositions is indeed concerned with words, lexical competence, in addition to learner strategies. Her approach, however, seems to aim at the immediate improvement on the usage of vocabulary rather than focus on an analysis of vocabulary knowledge or look at the processes that are involved in the acquisition proper. Moreover, similarly to Machado Fª., she has certainly circumscribed her interest to a very troublesome sector in the learning of

words, but one that covers a relatively small, closed set of words --prepositions, that is, a particular type of grammatical words or functors . Though her dissertation presents a quite extensive and detailed multi-discipline-based analysis of nine English prepositions which stand among the most frequent ones (of, in, on, at, from, for, to, by, and with), the treatment of the subject, as far as it relates to the process whereby the words get internalized and may or may not subsequently be retrieved by the learners, remains nonetheless peripheral. Notwithstanding the multi-discipline nature of her approach, it still is basically a linguistic-bound look at foreign language vocabulary very little tainted, so to speak, with psychological issues (mind processes, for that matter). Quite straightforwardly the title of the work indicates what it is encapsulating: products and teaching. Thus, it falls again mostly into what Paul Meara (1980) has called 'management of learning', in opposition to 'learning' proper (see below: pp. 54 ff).

Next in the list is D'Ely's (1983) thesis. This one also shares many points with Bazzo's, Fernandes', and Quintanilha's works. D'Ely too tackles the development of communicative competence in FLL and also works on materials design for the improvement of fluency, though the focus now is on the oral expression of students in the initial stage of the English course at the University who are classified as typical false beginners. She denounces and rejects the lack of sufficient concern with the learners' needs, interests, and background, a major flaw that is implicit in the materials associated with the structural approach to language learning and the consequent failure to promote satisfactory communicative skills in the students' performance. Though taking a less radical stance than Quintanilha, who in considering the intermediate stage of the curriculum discarded all sorts of predetermined and controlled linguistic content, D'Ely claims that in order to override, or at least to reduce the magnitude of the mismatch between the learners' reality and the design of the materials, the latter has to receive less emphasis on the conceptual and linguistic content of the units and, conversely, provide activities that might trigger the learners' genuine self-involvement and in which interactional initiatives do prevail. This requires and simultaneously allows a shift of focus, on the part of the learners, from the formal structure of the language towards their efforts in learning how to mean while they are engaged in aiming at basically two functions of the language, informative and interactive, so as to bridge information gaps in 'factual communication', on the one hand, and to break silence and open a channel for further socialization in 'phatic communication' (sic), on the other.

If attention is to be paid primarily to fluency rather than accuracy, then the activities and exercises proposed by materials should comply with four principles:

1) to promote the **interchange of information** among learners (one learner has the knowledge that is needed by the other learners in order for their task to be accomplished);
2) to allow the **choice** of individualized ways to get the meaning across, instead of imposing prescribed language to be imitated, and in doing so to foster the ability for decision-making in real time;
3) to provide opportunities for the learners to engage in **interaction** both with their environment and their peers in cooperative tasks (initiating steps, getting feedback, giving feedback, etc.); and,
4) to give learners a chance to become aware of the **significance** of the structural and functional aspects of the language when it is used with a meaningful purpose and embedded in near natural contexts of communication (pp. 10, 11, 101).

Such concern with the use of language in the heat of interactive engagement, involving choices in real time and the ability to activate previous knowledge and incorporate new information gained from cooperative activities, is central in D'Ely's proposition of materials design. Adopting a Hymesian perspective, she argues that materials should enable students to develop their 'communicative competence' integrated with performance factors. So, based on Levelt's (1978) levels of skills, she sees the acts of communication as involving a hierarchical sequence of decisions from upper plans to lower ones, and the completion of higher complex operations as depending on the achievement and integration of more elementary lower plan operations. Below is her borrowed scheme:

1. The decision of what to communicate (selection of topic)	UPPER LEVEL PLANS OR PROGRAMS
2. The decision of how to communicate (choice of an *appropriate syntactic schema* to express intention)	
3. The act of building up the chosen syntactic schema (selection and organization of sentences and selection of vocabulary)	LOWER LEVEL PLANS OR PROGRAMS
4. The act of realizing the language items, phonetically in speech	

(D'Ely 1983: 34-5)

The first decisions to take place are at the upper levels and they determine lower-level choices by constraining the range of their linguistic possibilities to fit in the previous plans. However, to put decisions into operation it is necessary that the processing at the lower levels be as quick and easy as possible, so that the greater the automaticity achieved at these levels of skill in using linguistic knowledge communicatively the more attentional capacity would be left to coordinate other decisions and control the corresponding operations.

The improvement of control and automaticity of both the formal and functional aspects of language in performance is explicitily stated as the objective of her proposition for the Oral Expression part of the First Phase of the Course of English of UFSC, namely, to give students the "opportunities to utter appropriate words or sentences in a communicative context and recall their basic ability in using the language" (p.55). Together with a clear commitment to this, it is somehow implicit the acknowledgement of the crucial role of vocabulary knowledge as a part of that which accounts for one of the four dimensions of knowledge, i.e. "possibility", that support 'communicative competence' in the Hymesian concept (p. 37). Though paying lip-service to the importance of linguistic competence (p. 83), she nevertheless considers vocabulary as mostly playing the role of slot fillers in syntactic structures (p. 58). Additionally, since the emphasis goes to the abilities in the **use of language** in face-to-face interaction, here too, the building of knowledge as such is, again, assigned to other parts of the First Phase course which are responsible for the work on receptive skills; namely: reading, grammar, and listening comprehension.

Thus, the students are given opportunities to experience meaningful use of the vocabulary they are supposed to already possess as a way to turn this knowledge accessible in their ability for recognition, recall, and use of strategies for communication (pp. 112-126).

Another thesis worthwhile examining is Penha's (1984). After having suspected that Brazilian students' weakest of all the 'four skills' was listening comprehension, she attempts to analyse the sources of their problems. She observes the performance of fourteen freshmen majoring in English in the regular two-hour weekly laboratory sessions along the first semester of the UFSC "Letras" course. The students received an initial 45 minutes test upon entering the program and a similar one at the end of the term to have their progress appraised. They did not undergo any experimental treatment, but answered a questionnaire designed to bring about introspective data. The tests and the questionnaires provided her material for interpretation. She tackles this part based on a review of literature about the constraints imposed on listening tasks both by the linguistic characteristics of the aural input

(particularly syntactic complexity due to various kinds of embedding, discontinuous constituents, absence of relative pronouns, low-degree audibility of function words) and the mental processing overload owing to span limitations of human short-term memory storage, particularly, as it is the case with her language-learning beginners, when there is not yet enough expertise necessary to strategically chunk more information into the few manageable items so as to prevent loss in piling up incoming information uttered in native speakers' rate of speech delivery.

Penha's study concludes that the students need more systematic exposure to spoken samples of the target language to improve their phonetic encoding, otherwise without an accurate minimum store of mental representations decoding of language forms is necessarily interrupted and even abandoned. In other words, without a certain base of stable and easily accessible entries in their mental lexicons, students' listening comprehension is hindered to an unbearable point. Tremendous difficulties in syntactic understanding, inability to build a schematic framework for anticipating possible meaningful input, all these add to phonetic misinterpretations as the main sources of troubles she identifies in a translation of the students' complaints of lack of vocabulary knowledge. Listening comprehension is a complex skill involving a several-stage process dependent on the existence of previous structures of knowledge that require specific learning in themselves.

Simões (1986) explores the relationships holding between perception of discourse type characteristics by students of EFL and their ability to use verb tense in different contexts by taking advantage of various kinds of redundancy markers. She takes Longacre's (1983) typology of discourse genres --narrative, procedural discourse, behavioral discourse, and expository discourse-- and based on studies of the English verb tenses (Leech, 1974a; Kaluza, 1979; Tregidgo, 1974; Bull, 1971) determines the possible functions the latter may play in discourse types. She lists the choices students may have in using verb forms in accordance to the contextual constraints brought about either by the underlying notional structure of the discourse type --whose main purpose may be to tell a story, or to prescribe a series of actions to achieve a given end, or to suggest some line of behavior, or still to explain some event, some mechanism, etc.-- or its surface structure encoding. Apparently the students cope with the code redundancy on the surface structure very well. The problem is that various sources of difficulties may arise following variations in the author's ad hoc intentions that produce embedded and compound discourses not always appropriately noticed by the learners, who tend to overgeneralize the use of verb forms that mark the main line of each discourse type throughout the texts, or conversely fail to recognize the main line

type of discourse if they are driven by overgeneralization of some initial embedded discourse characteristics.

Whenever the students could rely on lexical cues signaling redundancy (an adverbial or other lexical items constraining the use of verb forms --'yesterday, ...[verb + -ed]...' , '...[will + verb]... the coming Monday', etc.) in authentic texts which were prepared for cloze tests she found they performed significantly better in predicting verb tense than when they were required to gather contextual cues through an analysis of the situational context [9] to determine the proper tense use. This is particularly interesting to our concern in that it highlights the potentially facilitative capability that lexical knowledge may have in predicting up-coming language. But it also entails that FL students might not venture themselves in contextual inferencing as often as it might be presumed or are not properly equiped to do it with success. Therefore another reason justifying efforts regarding VA works. [10]

Simões deals with verbs, therefore vocabulary knowledge and lexical competence. Moreover, she works in an area of research that is expected to promote a great deal of auspicious findings in the studies of language use, that of the mutual demands made by lexis and discourse. However, her work could be labelled, without any injustice, as an approach to the relation between **discourse and verb grammar**

Closer to the end of the two decades is Tomitch's (1988) work. Based on the Schema Theory of the representation of memory contents, she explores the crucial relationships between knowledge-of-the-world availability and the ability to construct the meaning of English expository texts by Brazilian foreign-language learners/readers at the intermediate level of proficiency who have already surpassed the reading obstacles due to the absolutely impeding lack of basic language knowledge inherent in earlier stages. Reading is an interactive process involving not only recognition of the target language grammar, sentence structures, and vocabulary, but also the use of strategies to open the ways to relevant stored general knowledge structures. She researches particularly the effectiveness of two prereading activities she borrows from studies of reading in English as L1 --Possible Sentences and Request Procedure-- in activating, or building if not available, the knowledge encapsulated in the readers' memory schemata.

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[9] Presumably the situational context had to be inferred from cues in the texts themselves.

[10] This is in line with the findings of Bensoussan, M & Laufer, B (1984) reported in Lexical guessing in context in reading comprehension.

Since unfamiliar contents are more difficult to cope with than the form in which they are conveyed, so, instead of dealing with the formal schemata in which the knowledge related to the rhetorical organization of texts is stored, she concentrates particularly on content schemata, that is, that part of the readers' previous knowledge related to the subject matter of a text that they should possess, activate, and bring in to the task in order to afford themselves a proper framework for the understanding of the text.

Tomitch is not directly concerned with the knowledge of the target language the learners/readers may have. If she assesses their proficiency it is just to level them so as to better control the effects of the experimental treatment she applies to them. However, Possible Sentences is a prereading activity involving vocabulary instruction (pronunciation and meaning, retrieval of closely related associates to the targets, and use in sentential context) that consists of a provision of key words carefully extracted exclusively from the high content structures of the target text. From this list subjects pick up at least two words and combine them into a sentence they think will possibly occur in the text they are about to read and then they check for sentence predicted accuracy in the reading exercise. In doing this they certainly are dealing with language, but beyond that, since words name concepts, and concepts are embedded and interrelated into larger schemata (Howard, 1987: 51-2; Nagy & Herman, 1987: 30), by accessing them, subjects are actually activating or building relevant schemata and somehow making predictions about the text contents. Tomitch demonstrates that this can affect text comprehension in a positive fashion. Therefore such pre-reading activity has a practical value in pedagogical terms, only as far as making sense of expository texts by intermediate-level learners of EFL goes, for in what it relates to possible vocabulary-learning gains she acknowledges that further research is still needed.

Finally, ending the PGI list,[11] Burity (1989) discusses many technical problems of translation and based particularly on the theoretical work of Eugene Nida finds guidance to overcome linguistic and cultural diversity in order to bring about the closest equivalence in meaning and style in transposing a very peculiar kind of 'literary form' (discourse genre?) -- **proverbs**-- from one language to another. His thesis does not regard issues immediately related to FLL, though. In addition to that, he seems to favor approaching translation beyond the literal boundaries of words and even despite them. Nonetheless, in a sense,

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[11] I presume the list could even be a little bigger than this as far as what the titles of a few other theses may suggest. I was not successful, however, in getting hold of their contents, because I could not have access to them the various occasions I tried to do so. Anyway, now I strongly believe that the possibilities of an awareness of the 'neglected area' (see Ch. 2) might have been scarce, not to mention an explicit concern with it.

many of the sayings he studies, besides showing fixedness of form, behave somewhat like 'stable' and 'self-sufficient' units of meaning. Some even bear straight translational equivalence in the two languages he mainly focuses on --English and Brazilian Portuguese. In all these aspects, they share similarities with vocabulary items, but that is all.

Summing up the most relevant points that have been highlighted in the reviewed works of the PGI program of UFSC:

- subclass distribution of nouns in English and its influence on grammatical choices of article usage which is related to detrimental interference of L1 lexical knowledge in FL acquisition (Machado Filha)
- controlled ways of presenting selected L2 input for the development of minimal competence in basic reading comprehension of pre-college level informative texts involving cumulative work with 3,000 selected useful TL words and training in lexical guessing ability to compensate for gaps in receptive VK (vocabulary knowledge) by making use of learners' previous knowledge of cognates, already known L2 words, and topic familiarity (Léffa)
- learners' problems arising from English determinants of syntactic choices of word order of adjectivals in NP (Assis)
- mismatch between the different ways of conveying notions of time relations in the past in English and Portuguese verbs (Freitas Oliveira)
- guidelines for the presentation of selected L2 input aiming at rule-learning (word-stress placement) as a preliminary knowledge base necessary for a phonologically sounder expansion of item-learning (vocabulary building) (Baptista)
- tacit recognition of VK and vocabulary skills as an integral part of reading comprehension abilities whose component relative to the activation of world knowledge is expected to play a major role in compensating for lack of L2 linguistic knowledge (Souza)
- basic ways and means of developing learners' FL communication abilities and the salience VK assumes for them (Bazzo)
- vocabulary as a skill in its own right, even though a clear picture of its role and connections with other kinds of knowledge and skills for communication is not at issue (Fernandes)
- guidelines for the development of learners' oral fluency after the acquisition of basic knowledge of L2 items and structures (Quintanilha)
- learners' difficulties in consolidating the knowledge and improving the ability for the use of basic English prepositions (Araújo)

- improvement of automaticity in using available appropriate language knowledge integrated with the development of interactional skills (D'Ely)
- difficulties inherent in the learners' task of developing listening comprehension skills which arise from lack either of linguistic knowledge (VK included: scarcity or weakness of mental representations of linguistic items --phonological coding of lexical entries, etc.-- due to insufficient exposure to them) or of automaticity in retrieving which cause impediment in the parsing of more complex syntactic constructions, thus precluding the prediction of incoming language and the concurrent building of a framework to organize the piling up of successive pieces of information (Penha)
- learners' inferencing (in)ability in identifying discourse types, an enabling or precluding factor in the retrieval of their typical associations with verb tenses in English (Simões)
- basic activities for the activation or building of conceptual knowledge via work with vocabulary as a means for the improvement of learners' L2 reading comprehension ability (Tomitch)
- semantic and stylistic crosslinguistic equivalence of multi-word linguistic items (Burity)

It is noticeable from the above review that some important aspects of lexical proficiency received direct attention --the usage of articles, prepositions, order of adjectivals in prenominal strings, verb tenses (Machado, Assis, Araújo, Freitas, Simões). The relationships VK holds with schemata of world knowledge as a factor having a bearing on reading comprehension was also an object of concern, either explicitly or tacitly (Léffa, Tomitch, Souza). Receptive VK, however, not only in its written modality, but also in the spoken one (Penha), was not the only kind of lexical knowledge that mattered. The improvement of automaticity, fluency in productive spoken communication, also occupied many (Bazzo, Quintanilha, D'Ely, Fernandes). Another aspect of this modality of productive VK that was at issue was placement of stress in word syllables (Baptista). A clear compensatory approach to inevitable lack of VK can be found too (Léffa, Souza), as well as a concern with higher inferencing abilities in text comprehension (Simões). Still on the productive side, the rendering of meaning and style similarities in different languages, in spite of the possible contrasting lexical distribution and lexical gaps (Burity).

The works examined were mostly dealing with many specific aspects related rather exclusively with the activation of lexical competence, on the one hand, or the problems associated with the lack of it, on the other, but clearly not with the ways to build that competence. Moreover, such interest in lexical proficiency has not assumed the status of an explicit proposition or that of a clearly stated object of concern in any of the PGI dissertations.

This bird's eye view (biased or brief though considerably thorough) suffices to show us that quite a lot of attention has been paid to FLL subjects. There is no doubt that this has been a matter of concern in my/our immediate institutional environment. On the other hand, a similar comment can not be extended to include the organization of available knowledge about vocabulary proficiency and the ways and means that lead to acquisition. This fact in itself just highlights the urgency of works in the area. [12]

1.2 - A matter of general concern

People very often attribute their difficulties in communication to vocabulary problems. Particularly foreign language learners blame their linguistic troubles on the lack

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[12] As far as UNICAMP. Bibl. Central. Serviço de Inf. s/ Livro Didát. (1989) *O que sabemos sobre livro didático: Catálogo analítico* mirrors the state of affairs in the studies of language learning associated with instructional materials in Brazil, a similar remark can be made about our nationwide panorama. The scarcity of works exploring problems in connection with vocabulary learning is blatant, let alone foreign-language vocabulary. Out of around 290 papers (academic and otherwise) that underwent analysis, only thirteen have something to do with matters of L1 vocabulary in general. The great majority of these (Abstracts 369, 262, 381, 377, 227, 304, 24, 38, 201) have a bearing on the readability issue --lexical inadequacy of materials in regard to learners' social background and/or knowledge structure. Two others deal with precisely a somewhat reverse problem: the selection of literary material is related to the promotion of socially inadequate vocabulary acquisition (199); and (261) complains that literary schoolbooks are designed to exercise vocabulary expansion activities to the detriment of critical reading. One proposes that the selection of vocabulary in materials should be directed so as to allow the acquisition of phonological and graphic dimensions of words (278); and a last one focuses on words and text cohesion. (259).

As to FL vocabulary, there are four abstracts in a 20-item section for Foreign Languages. Three proposals: (293) availability of lists of frequency of the words as one of the criteria for the evaluation of TESOL materials; quidelines for vocabulary retention in ESP materials (298); and special attention to lexical contrast (Portuguese and Spanish) in materials of Portuguese as an FL for NS of Spanish (294). And one evidence for the superior teaching effectiveness of the Direct Method over the Traditional Method in promoting the acquisition of active vocabulary. Curiously enough and in line with the world history of vocabulary-acquisition studies (cf. in this respect Carter & McCarthy 1988: 39ff), the paper referred to in this abstract (282) was published in 1935!

of vocabulary knowledge; many of whom would simplistically even equate FL learning to the acquisition of L2 lexical equivalents to their L1 words, as James (1980: 83) and many others have pointed out.[13] Maybe not all the problems are well diagnosed. Instead of only vocabulary, other factors might as well be responsible for the complaints --lack or misuse of discourse competence, sociolinguistic competence, etc. Nevertheless, it is commonsense that words are crucial in communicative performance. This is so much so that it is not a rare experience to come across recurrent passages in the literature dedicated to language learning in which people express their concern with lexical competence. A myriad of pertinent examples is readily available.

In a brief introductory review of the literature on the importance of lexical proficiency in communicative competence, Harley & King (1989: 416) cite Faerch & Kasper's (1983) study of **communication strategies that L2 learners resort to in conversation**. These authors found that learners consider the main source of their problems to be primarily lexical. This is evidenced by an overwhelming occurrence of instances of strategies which focus on vacabulary rather than grammmar or phonology (pronunciation difficulties). We can see in Bazzo's (1983) data many examples which perfectly illustrate this point. 'P', 'H', 'A', and 'S' stand for the students' names; 'Te' for teacher and 'Ev' for everybody.

P - Hum ... I think it is ... (pause to think) in your (gestures - mime)
H - pocket?
P - pocket? Yes. (laughs - signs of satisfaction)
(p. 118)

P - Hum ... I do know to say in English ...
Te - Try to explain ...
P - A thing that you use when you are going to smoke. Hum ... to put fire ...
Te - Ya. That's OK -- fire -- matches.
Ev - Matches
Te - A box of matches.
(Appendix, p. 1)

A - Well we use to, a pen and a pencil, to write and a ruler to ...
P - To make lines ...

[13] It is worth bearing in mind that lexical gaps are inherently a phenomenon (presumably) common to all languages, since not all kinds of human experience are shared similarly across different cultures or expressed through the same linguistic means.

A - To make lines and the eraser to ...
P - I don't know how to say.
Te - To erase, of course! (smiles)
(*Appendix*, p. 8)

Te - What would you say is her, well, noticeable feature? If you look at her which can be said to be her noticeable feature?
P - She's very ... how can I say? (hesitation) Er ... How can I say?
Te - What do you think, S? What in her attracts you more?
(Silence)
P - How can I say, when a person, everybody likes her or she's ... ah! ... How can I say?
Te - Nice?
P - Nice?!
Te - Friendly ... her friendly smile ...
P - Friendly ... I think she is a ... my opinion ... she has a friendly expression in her eyes.
Te - Hum, hum (Yes) The ... (hesitation)
P - The form, form? No. How you say? Form that she laughs?
Te - The way she laughs?
P - The way.
Te - The way she smiles.
P - Hum, hum (Yes)
Te - Yes. Anybody else? Don't you have any opinion about her?
H - She has a fair complexion?
Te - Yes. (...)
(App., p. 47) [14]

Harley & King (and Laufer, 1986 too) refer to another kind of evidence. It comes from studies of **native speakers' reactions to learners' errors** (1989: 415). Lexical errors are indicated as the main cause of impairment in the comprehensibility of the learners intended message when compared to morpho-syntactic or phonological errors.

Though not any pertinent example is available to illustrate those negative reactions aroused in native speakers by learners'/foreigners' lexical errors, they are nonetheless often referred to in the literature as an object for concern.

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[14] More instances of learners' strategies like these, which illustrate many of the various aspects in connection with vocabulary acquisition (basic building of lexical knowledge, strengthening of associations, developing retrieval fluency, etc.), can be seen in Appendix 1 at the end of this dissertation. Cf. also Skehan (1989) for an analysis of strategy studies in which we are shown that the majority of beginning and intermediate learners' strategies are brought about in relation to activities of vocabulary learning (p. 89).

Still another kind of evidence we can find is **students' overt complaints** (cf. Laufer, 1986: 70; Meara, 1980: 221; Moran, 1991: 389; Yorio 1971: 108-9[cited in Adams 1982: 155; Moran 1991: 389]; and Dubin, 1989: 283, among others). Bazzo (1983), again, presents a rich testimony. After participating in her nine-week experiment with communicative teaching, she had her subjects --six secondary students-- respond an explicitly evaluative questionnaire. Very symptomatically, all the participants referred to problems with vocabulary as the major hindrance preventing their participation and full involvement in the experimental sessions. Conversely, they also emphasized the opportunity to override their limitations and thus improve lexical knowledge and ability as among their most positive gains. To questions as

> 6. De que aspecto em nossas sessões você mais gostou e por quê?
> [What did you like most in our experiment encounters? Why?]

and

> 7. Você sentiu algum tipo de dificuldade na execução de nossas tarefas? Quais? Como, em sua opinião, elas poderiam ter sido evitadas?
> [Did you experience any sort of difficulty in tackling the tasks? If so, which? In your opinion, how could they have been avoided?]
> (Appendix, p.74)

she obtained answers such as these:

> Student H
> (...)
> 6. A oportunidade de aumentar meu vocabulário.
> 7. Sim, a falta de vocabulário, com a troca de idéias e o aumento de vocabulário através de textos, etc.
> [6. A chance to enlarge my vocabulary knowledge.
> 7. Yes, lack of VK. By negotiating ideas and the increase in vocabulary through contact with texts, etc.]
> (Appendix, p.75)

> Student A
> (...) Dentro das dificuldades, creio que me falta um pouco mais de vocabulário devido à falta de conversação.

[As to the difficulties, I believe I lack a bit more of vocabulary, because of lack of conversation.]
(App., p.75)

Student R
(...) O que mais gostei foi ter de contar algo, um esforço para encontrar, achar meios de me exprimir, tentar sanar as dificuldades lingüísticas.
[What I did like most was the need to tell something, an effort in searching, finding the means to express myself, trying to override linguistic difficulties.]
(App., p.75)

Student P
(...) em cada aula eu aprendi coisas novas, palavras, expressões e maneira de falar fluentemente(...) lembrando de termos já aprendidos e aprendendo outros(...).
[(...) in each class I learned something new, words, expressions, to speak fluently (..) being able to remember already known terms or learning new ones (...).]
(App., p.76)

Student S
(...) 6. Gostei de todos, pois acho que o essencial em um diálogo de língua inglesa é ativar a memória do aluno (...).
7. ... se eu tivesse mais conhecimento do vocabulário principalmente.
[(...) 6. I enjoyed every aspect of it, for I believe that what is essential in an English language activity like dialogue is to activate the learner's memory (...).
7. ... mostly, if I had greater vocabulary knowledge.]
(App., p.77)

Student Ta.
(...) 7. Às vezes com relação ao vocabulário, mas em grupo conseguimos saná-lo...
[(...) 7. Sometimes with vocabulary, but in the group we all managed to overcome that difficulty...]
(App., p.77)
(All the emphases are added -- AEVA)

Though Bazzo's primary purpose was to demonstrate the ineffectiveness of the prevailing approaches to foreign language teaching in our school system and to propose their

replacement by alternative more communicative methodologies, i.e. new systems of classroom activities and teachers' approaches to allow the learner in taking the initiative and thereby actually turn their learning into a more meaningful process, her work is richly revealing of the previously unnoticed needs of the students and some of the reasons why lexical proficiency has been driven towards the foreground of the language learning scene. This neglect and a shift of interest towards vocabulary will be treated farther (Section 2.1).

In addition to the points above, in the area of reading research strong evidence has also been obtained (cf. Nation & Coady 1988) in connection with the part knowledge of words plays in the **'readability of a text'** (Klare, 1974, 1975, 1984 cited in Duin & Graves, 1987: 313) [15]: in order to the reader be minimally able to understand a text, that is, to grasp its gist, it is necessary that he/she know a certain minimal amount of lexical items particularly in the passages where the main ideas are conveyed. This equals to saying that vocabulary knowledge and **reading comprehension** are intricately interrelated not only in studies in connection with *L1* (Nagy & Herman, 1987: 27 ff; Sternberg, 1987: 90; Kameenui, Dixon, and Carnine 1987: 130 ff; Beck, Mckeown, and Omanson 1987: 147 ff; and many others), but also in studies of SLA as well (Kruse 1979: 208; Adams 1982: 155; and, again, many others).

In a similar vein, Kelly (1991) has gathered evidence to support the belief that, beyond the intermediate stages of foreign language learning, lack of vocabulary knowledge constitutes the main hindrance precluding satisfactory **listening comprehension.**

Finally, Meara (1984; cited in Laufer 1986) studying the language of students in the University of Utrecht found that they made much more errors of vocabulary use as compared to grammar errors. It is therefore pertinent to include the relatively large proportion of **learners' lexical errors** as another category of evidence (cf. Sonaiya (1991) and Lennon (1991) who also have found similar large proportions of errors of this category in the language of advanced learners).

Thus, many a specialist in diverse areas of interest has shown a concern with lexical proficiency in the various ways it is a crucial asset in human communication. Its generalized importance is attested not only in relation to language comprehension, and of course language production, but also as a major factor in language acquisition as well. 'As Krashen has often pointed out, learners don't carry grammar books around in their pockets, they carry dictionaries'! (Hatch 1983: 74).

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[15] See also from the PGI list: Tomitch, 1988.

CHAPTER TWO

APPROACHING VOCABULARY IN FOREIGN-LANGUAGE LEARNING

One thing that strikes one most when first approaching the international literature related to vocabulary in FLL is the consensus among researchers that it has been a neglected area. But then it also emerges that, in some respects, research on matters relating vocabulary and learning is at least a century old (cf. the item-learning research work by the pioneer German psychologist Ebbinghaus with his meaningless syllables --cvc-- by the 1880s) [1] and spread through various disciplines (cognitive psychology, linguistics, psycholinguistics, applied linguistics, artificial intelligence). This somehow contradictory reality -- longevity of research leading to a scattered condition and an avoided area-- may perhaps partially account for both the theoretical difficulties in developing a broad general framework to cover vocabulary studies and the difficulties in achieving agreed-upon proposals for practical guidelines in vocabulary learning. In spite of all these difficulties, however, perhaps never before in History has there been, as today, so great a proportion of bilinguals of various kinds. People somehow learn languages and their words! A twofold question, however, remains: how much does such feat cost people in terms of human efforts and time and whether, or to what extent, can the values of these variables be deliberately reduced, for in the next coming years more and more people certainly will crave for an answer to this.

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1 Cf. Greene & Hicks (1984: 79, 81) for a comparison of this original research on 'non-sense syllables' and that more recent in the 1950s which was made on 'trigrams', items even more controlled in their meaninglessness.

Such is the rainbow on the horizon. On the one side there is the rain of lack of understanding, on the other a bright sunny reality of language learning achievements successful to various degrees. How come this is so? That is the question, for even though it might be postulated that reality precedes consciousness, an understanding of the facts of VA would certainly make FLL more humane by allowing better mediation. Consciousness changes human reality. I hope this does not sound like a truism only, but may help see the ground from which this part is approached.

This chapter is designed to give an overview of the area of vocabulary in FLL. It has two sections. In the first one I explore points related to the neglected condition that has prevailed in vocabulary studies in general in recent times as a consequence of problems in linguistic theory. In the second, I identify an area of neglect in studies of **vocabulary in FLL** in particular and attempt to envisage and somehow map that specific area within an applied linguistic perspective.

2.1 - A once 'neglected area' is moving closer to the foreground [2]

> In the beginning there was phonology,
> then came morphology, and syntax.
> Now, it is lexicon time!

Before entering the PGI program, I had the opportunity of reading Bazzo's (1983) study and I could not avoid noticing the extent to which improvement in vocabulary knowledge was a basic need so insistently denounced by the learners. I kept it in my mind while I also further suspected that an exploration of the theme of lexical proficiency and its

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2 While this project was in progress, a new line of research eventually was opened in the PGI program to pursue matters specifically related to foreign-language acquisition. Also at UNICAMP-IEL a parallel line has been offered to research language acquisition topics. In addition, in January 1993, under the coordination of members of the PGI staff, an international conference on psycholinguistics was held at UFSC. Topics regarding lexical use and bilingualism were an integral part of the three-week meeting program. This might signal a significant change in our institutional panorama regarding this 'neglected area'.

acquisition had not yet prompted any specific study among us. These two points eventually led me to decide upon pursuing to work in this area. I was happy to have found an area of virgin territory, so to speak, but I did not ask myself why this was so. It was only later, during the preliminary readings to become acquainted with the issues in the area, that I learned that the want of vocabulary knowledge and the neglect of the ways to cope with it were in fact a rather universal phenomenon. So much so that another quite recurring experience one can have is to tediously come across almost inevitable similar remarks on a 'neglected area'.

During the effort to identify the basic literature in connection with vocabulary in FLL/SLA, I became acquainted with some works which shared a very striking peculiar characteristic: they all began by highlighting a problem, the relatively neglected condition of vocabulary in applied linguistic studies, and the assignment of responsibility. Let me suggest the reader to refer him-/herself to a cascade of nineteen quotations in Appendix 3 to experience the feeling. Here, it is worth bringing in some salient points associated with those remarks that applied linguists made to call attention to the problem within the community involved with language learning endeavors.

It began early in the 1970s and has equally concerned American and British scholars, but also other researchers elsewhere. The first outstanding work was Wilkins' (1972) in which the methodologist blamed the linguists for their concern with those aspects of language structure that lend themselves to analysis more readily --phonology and grammar-- while vocabulary was discriminated against. This led to a 'structural view' of language learning according to which first there should be the mastering of grammar. Vocabulary should only be dealt with in later stages. Against this position Wilkins proposed the recovering of the pre-structural tradition of vocabulary studies to begin to counterbalance grammar predominance in language learning.

In part similarly, Twaddell (1973) saw that it was the existence of a doctrine about the structure of the language in which vocabulary is downgraded and a reaction against the learners' naive exaggerated concern with words that drove FL teaching theoreticians and practitioners to treat lexis as just an illustration of structural grammatical topics. To compensate for this, he allowed that basic studies could concentrate on grammar and that V expansion be left to later stages when teaching how to learn words should take predominance over the teaching of items proper.

Richards (1976) also blamed the still prevailing trends, at his time, among linguistic theoreticians for the lack of interest from the part of teachers and scholars in matters related to VA.

Again, Marton (1977) also denounced methodologists who had equated language learning to the achievement of 'functional knowledge of syntactic structures' and pronunciation, and the consequent treatment of VA as an occasional by-product.

Judd's (1978) criticism of the secondary status of VA was twofold. On the one hand, he rejected Twaddell's proposal for initial basic concentration on grammar patterns together with the postponement of 'massive vocabulary learning' to later stages and, on the other hand, he charged against the theoreticians of vocabulary instruction for their treatment of vocabulary not as a skill in itself, but as a means to an end (particularly reading and listening comprehension).

Meara (1978) too related the learners' concern with their lack of lexical knowledge to a detrimental emphasis on syntax. However, this time the reproach was mainly directed to psychologists for their disregard of 'what happens to FL words in initial stages of their acquisition'.

Complaints of this kind about the 'neglected area' are so pervasive that one begins to believe it is mandatory to pay a tribute to an already ossified couple of words before setting out to tackle any issue related to vocabulary in applied linguistics. Well, on my part, I think these references and the cascade of quotations in Appendix 3 have already done the job.

The works mentioned above are just a sample of the somewhat mandatory ones I managed to have access to in the search for an even larger list of works that constitute landmarks in the recent history of studies related to vocabulary in FLL/SLA. They are the works of some of the major authors in the area. A fact that may be easily attested either by the number of papers these authors have published in various journals of international audience, or by the repeated reference they have had in the work of others.

As the list of works grew bigger along the years, thus in a sense embodying evidence against itself, since each of the works has presumably reclaimed some part of the previously 'neglected area', one may expect that the issue might no longer be so much neglected as it used to be.[3] This seems logical. Therefore one can also wonder whether there still remains

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[3] The importance now being attributed to VA and other vocabulary-related topics seems to have finally reached an outstanding level. While this chapter was gaining a more definite written configuration, AILA issued a series of 4 catalogs listing the events to take place during the 10th. World Congress (August '93 - Amsterdam), and, interesting enough, "VA in SL/FL" has a section of its own --Section 20, that is, the next within a total of 30 ones which is closer to the first 19 ones that relate to the 19 Scientific Commissions -- with a substantial number of sessions for paper presentation all over the four days of the congress. Also interesting, out of a total of little more than eleven hundred expositions, sixty seven or so were presented by a few more than fifty-two Brazilian scholars (mostly from São Paulo [17], Campinas [13], Rio [8], Florianópolis [7], RGS [7]). From these, at least eight, that is, more than a tenth, have to do with matters of vocabulary. These are good news, I should say, although I also fear they might make this project look precociously old (cf. *AILA '93 congress guide*).

any a large untouched part of it, for an answer to this question might imply that the problem posed by the learners' urgent demands of VK may already, or may not yet, be satisfactorily solvable. This dissertation is not intended to look out for any major conclusive answer as to the extent of such possibility, of course, though I hope it will ultimately clear the way (mine, if nothing else) for any further step towards it, incipient as it may be.

Furthermore, if we briefly examine the references above and the string of quotes in Appendix 3, it is possible to extract some other interesting points from them. Firstly, the when: the outcry against the prevailing state of affairs began to grow in the 1970s and has basically persisted until very recently. Second, the what: the denounced circumstances are characterized as constituting an unbearable lack of attention towards vocabulary issues in general. Third: this (the where) is apparent in different areas and the work of different professionals --linguistics theorists, researchers, methodologists, textbook writers, teachers. Fourth, the who: linguists have favored many levels of linguistic analysis but lexis. Consequently (should I say 'concomitantly'?), the who else: applied linguists, methodologists, and language-teaching practitioners [4] have focused, on the one hand, on syntactic structures and pronunciation together with the functions the language is called for to accomplish while holding the belief, on the other hand, that vocabulary acquisition was just a matter of mere exposure --the more repeated the exposure, so much the better, that was all.

Still in connection with the problem pointed out in the references and the series of quotes stands the question about the reasons that have been amassed to account for that state of affairs. Several explanations have been tentatively advanced. Among the possible reasons, the influence of linguistic theories has been identified as the best candidate for the most outstanding role (cf Laufer 1986; Marton 1977; Richards 1976; Robinson 1990; Wilkins

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[4] These professionals are not necessarily 'followers' of linguists. The reverse order may also be true, but the 'Chomskyan Revolution' (Spolsky 1985: 276; Newmeyer 1988a: 2ff; Tanenhaus 1988: 4; Scliar-Cabral 1991: 20) of the 1960s, we are told everywhere, has caused so great an impact on language studies that even till very recently many internationally known applied linguists would let escape similar views in professional meetings (Hilário I. Bohn, personal communication in December 1992). In a similar vein, there follows a more recent corroboration of this:

> Over the years [in the two-decade history of AILA] there has been a shift away from the study of the application of linguistic theory to specific areas to a more problem-oriented view, where applied linguistics is seen rather as a means to help solve specific problems in society. No longer does linguistic theory tell us how we should apply this theory to learning a foreign language or to organizing language planning, but together with such disciplines as psychology, sociology, mathematics, computer science, to name but a few, applied linguistics focuses on the numerous and complex problem areas in society where language plays a role. (*AILA '93 Congress Guide*, p. 778).

1972). At the level of the δο'ξα ('doxa'), that is, it is a usual opinion that it all began when Chomsky at the end of the 1950s put forward his strong critical reaction against Skinner's conceptions of language acquisition. Put in rather schematic terms, the behavioristic account basically establishes that the processes of acquiring a language all melt down to associations that are made through habit formation. That is, after repeated exposure to adults' language, the child starts to imitate that language through trial and error, while the adults, through reinforcement --positive responsiveness, approval, encouragement, a sweet, etc., or punishment--, model the child's verbal behavior. Thus, the child learns to associate a given stimulus, say, an object perceived in her/his environment, with a response such as a string of sounds, that is, the name that labels that object.

The child then transfers such basic training and generalizes some salient features of that particular object to other objects bearing similar features. In so doing s/he sometimes goes beyond the adult standards, that is, s/he indulges her-/himself in the overgeneralization of a given particular feature during the categorization of a set of objects. A linguistic counterpart to this cognitive event also emerges: the child also in disagreement with the adults' model overgeneralizes the attribution of a label to her/his irregular concept. Subsequently, s/he narrows the categorization down as s/he learns to discriminate features which were previously perceived less saliently and disregarded, while on the other hand s/he simultaneously increases her/his linguistic funds. The child may say, for instance, 'dog' and point to a dog, or a cat, a teddy bear, a drawing of a horse, a fur coat, etc. until s/he eventually succeeds in discriminating these as different sets of objects, that is, different concepts, to which s/he learns to associate their particular names. In a similar way the child next [5] learns to refer to perceived associations of objects or events, thus moving from naming to combining words into sentence building.

A 'logical problem', however, had been disregarded: Chomsky denied that the behavioristic proposal could account for the infinite number of sentences a child learns to generate after having been exposed to comparatively so poor input. The behavioristic view also could not explain the fundamental similarity in the language of children from very different environments and cultural settings. Children, it was claimed, do not learn to imitate correctly. What they do learn is a very complex set of abstracted rules that they use to produce novel sentences which they have never come across before (cf. Ellis 1978: 172 ff; Tanenhaus 1988: 4 ff; Cook 1993: 13ff).

Chomsky went on with his theoretical undertakings and came up with a new view of language which at least in its initial formulations put too much emphasis on grammar,

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5 Some psycholinguists claim that the one-word phase is already syntactic in nature.

syntax that is, at the expenses of other aspects of language structure --vocabulary included-- and completely disregarded the use that speakers make of the language as well as the vicissitudes affecting actual linguistic performance. To grammar, namely syntax, was assigned the bulk of linguistic theory whose role was to describe the knowledge of the set of rules to generate grammatical sentences that an ideal speaker has to possess as a fully-fledged speaker of the language. The object of linguistic theory was the grammatical competence of that ideal speaker. Schematically, lexis was the realm of idiosyncrasy; syntax, that of rule-governed behavior. Imitation versus creativity. The Chomskyan gale, therefore, did not bring enough impetus to vocabulary studies, it rather worked very much like a detour.

Chomskyan theories caused a great impact on the studies of language matters. FLL/SLA was no exception [6]. And since it seems that for Chomsky what was really missing was a theory of syntax, as for vocabulary, the previous views could do. Syntax thus encompassed the noble parts of language theory. In connection with this downgrading of the *importance* of vocabulary, Laufer (1986: 70) argues that to work at a *theory of grammar* (syntax and phonology) is much more advantageous than one of lexis. To begin with because grammar constitutes a closed system of rules, she says, so it is more proper for abstraction and generalization, while vocabulary, being an open system of symbols, requires much more extended observations in order to draw any general formulation, even so this result, if obtained, often applies to much fewer events. In addition to this discouraging characteristic of the studies of lexis and as a consequence of it, statements made in grammar theory carry far more potentialities to meet the criteria of a 'good theory': greater explanatory power coupled with comparable simplicity and parsimony (p. 70).[7]

In fact, some authors trace this assignment of the 'cinderella' role to lexis even further back to 'the distinction between major syntactic grammar and the minor grammar of the lexicon' (Robinson 1990: 276) in connection with the 1930s' Bloomfieldian linguistic theory in which vocabulary was the repository of all 'irregularities' in the language.[8] Ludo Beheydt (1987), however, explicitly circumscribes the vocabulary conditon of a 'poor relation' to the

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6 The general interest the work of Krashen has aroused serves to attest this.

7 A somewhat similar view is held by James (1980: 29) and Zughoul (1991: 45); whilst Leech (1974b) regrets: 'What chiefly distinguishes lexical rules from grammatical rules is their limited productivity; that is, a lexical rule does not apply equally well to all the cases to which in theory it **may** apply.' (p. 211). Lexical rules (word formation: suffixation, prefixation, and compounding, as well as semantic transfer or transfer of meaning) are limited by various degrees of 'acceptability', he explains (pp. 210ff).

8 In like manner, Marton (1977) reminds us that language teaching methodologists have been strongly influenced by the structuralist approach to language and its penchant towards the analysis of sentence structure (pp. 33ff.).

American linguistics while claiming that it has long had a better status in the structural linguistics of Europe. He notes that since De Saussure's lectures on the theory of the linguistic sign comprising a sound-image, --the 'signifier'--, and a concept, --the 'signified'--, the way to a firmly established 'difference between verbal form, concept and referent [has been paved, which] is particularly important for the learning of an FL vocabulary, especially since this relation is not equivalent in different languages.' (p. 56).[9] Moreover, he adds, the De Saussurean lexicon is not merely an 'unordered collection but a highly structured system of signs,' (p. 56). In addition to having meaning, the words also bear a semantic value which can only be born of their relationships of similarity and difference with related words of adjacent meanings in the system. This view cleared the horizon to the theory of conceptual fields (then, 'semantic' and 'lexical' fields) introduced by Trier's (1931) analysis of the historical changes undergone by the notion of 'knowledge' in the German language. Vocabulary has then become a system of interrelated networks of relations among the meanings of words (however, this view underwent eventual attack; cf. Cruse 1986) Furthermore, European linguistics has also offered the notion of valency, proposed by Tesnière in 1959, which characterizes words as grammatical entities in addition to their being lexical entities, that is, beyond their paradigmatic condition of wordclass membership, they are also provided with differential 'syntagmatic combinability' (p. 57). Thus, for instance, some nouns may occur with or without an article while others are regularly preceded by an article, which typically characterizes their syntagmatic behavior.

> He is at table.
> *He is working at the table*
> as opposed to:
> He is at station. (ungrammatical)
> He is at the station. (p. 57) [10]

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9 In fact, in Europe, that distinction between 'sense' and 'reference' is even older, for it was proposed by the German philosopher Frege in the 1890s.

10 In fact, Beheydt seems to be operating here with an expansion of Tesnière's concept which originally referred to the property verbs have in determining the number of participants of the process they represent. For instance, in the sentences 'it rains' (E.), 'il pleut' (F.), 'es regnet' (G.), 'it', 'il', and 'es' are just formal grammatical slot fillers marking the absence of any actual participants. Thus the verbs 'rain' (to rain), 'pleut' (pleuvoir), 'regnet' (regnen) are said to be 'avalent' verbs; this becomes much clearer in their translational equivalents in the sentences 'chove' (P. - chover), 'llove' (S. - llover), and 'piove' (I. - *pióvere*). Verbs may also be monovalent: 'the dog barks'; bivalent: 'birds eat worms'; and, trivalent: 'birds give worms to the offspring'. However, in sentences like 'birds, insects, and some mammals fly', the subject is plural, but the verb is monovalent. (Silva Borba 1971: 142; Ducrot & Todorov 1972: 273 ff; Dubois et al. 1973: 60). Moreover, what is being referred to by Beheydt here might also be related to the work of Machado Fa. (pp. 9ff above), but Beheydt's valency is a property that words themselves bear,

More recently, the larger and more intricate paper by Robinson (1990) brings us to his quite more radical stance on the issue. He embraces a claimed-to-be increasing number of theoretical linguistic models of competence, outside the mainstream trend, which shows a shift of emphasis on the role and status of vocabulary in relation to syntax. Moreover, psycholinguistic studies put forward lately may fit in them smoothly. There have been, particularly during the 1980s, attempts to move the lexicon from a 'discriminated against' (Levenston 1979) area to a more central position in the foreground by taking over from receding properties of grammar (syntax) --this is the case of the so-called 'word based grammars', on the one hand, as Robinson (1990) points out, and the models of language use that lend psycholinguistic support to them, such as that put forward by Marslen-Wilson and colleagues (cf. Marslen-Wilson & Tyler, 1980), on the other hand.

If we think of linguistic knowledge as comprising a system of symbols or databank, say words, on the one hand, and a set of rules to operate upon those symbols on the other, then we may compare it to a seesaw and note that depending on the particular stance of the language theorist, the weights are placed either on the set of rules, or grammar -- morpho-syntax-- which then becomes the generating module commanding rule application to combine the symbols from a slave system, say the lexicon, or conversely the weight is put on vocabulary which then stops being the repository of idiosyncrasies or that part of the system that is mainly acted upon and the word assumes a nobler role both in the processing of language, by functioning as the unit of processing, as well as in the description of the structure of the language system, by encapsulating within itself properties involving inter-word grammatical relationships. The system of symbols and the (set of) rules become one: a database. Thus, every symbol carries within itself the preferences for the possible combinations with other symbols. The split grammar theory cedes position to a unified grammar more in accordance to centuries old ideals (Robinson 1990: 276).

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whereas what she aimed at is the set of grammatical rules that determine usage of articles. This she finds in the interrelationships articles get in connection with different classes of nouns together with what the speakers intend to use them for. It seems that 'valency' is a further problem that could be added to her work. This time, however, the 'idiosyncratic' nature of words would stand higher.

Robinson (1990: 277; 279 ff) also works with Tesnière's concept, though seemingly complying to the original proposition of 'valence' as he spells it in SAE: both the British (Beheydt's 'valency') and the American forms basically capture the original chemistry notion of the power that atoms of different elements have of interacting with a varying number of atoms of hydrogen and a few other substances to form combinations. The Webster's *Third New International Dictionary* besides a reference to this meaning also displays secondary ones occurring in contexts related to biology and social psychology. As it often seems to be the case, however, linguistic contexts are not taken into account, not even at a possibly eventual tertiary rank, nor lastly in the Addenda Section, the new items limbo.

This is precisely what Robinson (1990) envisages by liberating language description from the 'hegemony of constituency theory' which he blames as the great villain in the story of the 'neglected area' in linguistics as well as its consequences in psycholinguistics and applied linguistics. The unit of analysis and/or processing is not the 'constituent' [11] inherited from the Bloomfieldian days and the a prioristic syntactical prevalence it then assumed. The view of language abandons the idea of hierarchical levels embodied in the 'tree' metaphor; it is describable as networks of relations of dependency frames, instead. Dependency (and the direction from heads to modifiers it involves) is akin to the idea of valence. The words inherently carry syntagmatic preferences that do not lend themselves to innocently fulfill the role of paradygmatic fillers of constituent slots (which gave birth to that game so much cherished by structural drill designers in past syntax-driven language teaching methodologies/materials).

Robinson (1990) maintains that constituency theory, which 'is basically a proposition about the hierarchical structure of language in which a succession of "empty" nodes is gradually broken up, or filled, by smaller units or constituents until the level of the word is reached' (275), is germane to the split grammar architecture and that underlying this is the assumption that 'the ordering of the constituents is done in some way "above" the level of the words themselves' (276).

In opposition to this hegemonic as well as hegemonical view Robinson (1990) proposes the alternative frame theory which preserves horizontal relationships so to speak. Furthermore, in a single move, besides rejecting grammar-internal modularity, he also dispenses with any formal distinction of language knowledge in the cognitive structure. Backed up by supporting points in the work of many --Bolinger's (1976), Schank's (1983), and McClelland & Rumelhart's (1986) somewhat optimistic views of human linguistic storage and processing abilities; Lyons' (1968) criticism of split language-theory design; Allwright's (1986), Ard & Gass' (1987), and Widdowson's (1988) discussion and proposal of alternative VA-driven grammar pedagogy; and Johnson-Laird's (1983) criticism of phrase structure-based parsing models that require a proliferation of adventitious 'principles' for dealing with unpredictable parsing problems-- he is enabled to embrace Hudson's (1983) proposition of the word as the 'optimum sized unit' for language description, as well as, he adds, for language structural knowledge pedagogy too. Thus, the word becomes the driving engine of the language learning process, it is no longer merely a sentence structure slot-filler.

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11 For a relatively detailed and extended discussion of this, though from and within a constituency perspective, cf. Clark & Clark 1977: Ch. 2, 6, 7, and pp. 311-2.

Such reversion of the pedagogical role of lexis vis-a-vis of syntax relies on the belief that sentence structure description requires very little to be stipulated besides lexical specifications. The word carries within itself both prototypical properties as well as peripheral ones which stem from valence, and argument-predicate structure of verbs, etc., that favours or prescribes a given frame rather than another one. Still, it might be asked what about the combinatorial relations that hold beyond the collocational friendliness of 'main' words that are endowed with the right to make use of their aggregating powers (heads of dependency as opposed to modifiers in Robinson's terms); in other words to what extent, or how far does such influence go? [12]

Even in the main UG tradition of the 1980s and its nativist proposition of a minimal core grammar, however (cf. Cook 1993: 158), the words now have been explicitly recognized as a major issue, particularly as far as language acquisition is concerned: knowledge and use of grammar (particularly the so-called Projection Principle) is dependent on usage knowledge of the specific properties of particular words in determining the behavior of other words, either by requiring the co-occurrence of certain classes of items or conversely by precluding such kind of occurrence, thus affecting the syntactic structures themselves. Take the following example sentences (Cook 1993) and compare their possibilities of syntactic behavior acceptance, in spite of their close semantic relatedness, in addition to paradigmatic similarity:

John **gave** the book to Mary
John **gave** Mary the book
John **donated** the book to Mary
* John **donated** Mary the book (ungrammatical)

So, the word has been moving in the last decades from a 'discriminated against' position to more central ones culminating in theories that assign to words functions that first belonged to grammar. This picture refers to changes in Linguistics. Perhaps as a result of such 'polarization', even the Chomskyan linguistics of the 1980s, the principles and parameters theory, ascribes to all lexical phrases in all languages a Projection Principle. This accounts for the determination that the lexical item (N, V, Prep, Adj) functioning as the head in the phrase structure projects on the other phrase slots (specifiers and complements)

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[12] This lexicalist view of language structure seems also to fit discourse analysis of the kind made by Phillips (1989) in which lexical items are found, at least statistically, to be exerting their long range power by presiding basic text-structure organization.

by prescribing what kinds of words may occur in the sentence environment (cf. Cook 1993: 158).

The words then have not only been seen as having also a determinant role in constraining syntax (principles and parameters theory), but also perhaps in a surprisingly [13] more modest fashion, they have been considered the product of the application of rules of word formation. In the first possibility, the words, though assuming a higher status in terms of having their capability of determinism recognized, are still the 'repository of idiosyncrasies' and the main source of problems in grammar theorizing (Cook 1993: 158). In the second, they are the object of a lexical theory (cf. Basílio 1991) that attempts to account for the processes whereby speakers of a language resort to certain procedures (derivation, construction of compound words, etc.) for combining symbols (via affixation, or compounding bases together) as a way of alleviating the loads put upon memory storage, or search and retrieval of symbols.[14] In doing so speakers get better equiped for making the use of language in communication more practical, effective, and flexible, Basílio claims (p. 10).[15]

The role of the lexicon has gained increasing importance by receiving properties previously assigned to phonology, morphology, and syntax. The words get permeated with otherwise grammar attributes, thus reducing the theoretical burdens posited upon a separate system of grammatical rules to drive linguistic processes (Adjémian 1983: 253; Harlow & Vincent 1988: 8 ff). This, however, might have a very problematic counterpart. As grammar theorizing gets alleviated from the complexities of assigning a set of rules on the one hand, more troublesome, on the other, could become the undertaking of understanding VA: 'It should be noticed, however, that in lightening the burdens of those who hope to explain syntactic development, we complicate the work of those who hope to explain lexical development.' (Maratsos 1978: 263).

A discussion of the word in linguistic theory has also to point to its semantic aspects. Several proposals for a theory of lexical meaning have been put forward, but perhaps it can be best approached by opposing atomism and contextualism. One of the most studied views claims that the meaning of any given word is analysable into its primary components --the

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[13] Translating this into psycholinguistic terms, the mental lexicon, a store of lexical knowledge, would be supplemented with a 'tool kit' (cf. Aitchison 1987: 107-17), a device to assemble and disassemble lexical items. Such device would enable memory storage economy: a relatively small number of items would suffice to generate much greater numbers of new items.

[14] Cf. Adjémian (1983) who also emphasizes such a creative side of lexical knowledge.

[15] There has been research work to find out whether words used in communication are really thus formed, or conversely whether they are stored and retrieved as ready-made items. However, results are not very conclusive, particularly in relation to FL use.

semantic features. The meaning of a word would be made up of the combination of a small number of features taken from a pool, also of manageable proportions, which some theorists even claimed to be universally sufficient to describe the meaning of all the words in any language. A very attractive proposition, no doubt. However, many criticized such metalanguage by arguing that it can not apply to all kinds of words, or may require a list of primitive features much bigger than it was proclaimed, or that the primitives themselves were not so much so, but had also to be described. Let us take, for instance, the word 'spinster' = [+human, {therefore [+animate]}, -male, +adult, -married]; this could perfectly fit a dictionary definition: **spinster** *-n*, an adult woman who is not married [16]; but now cf. the noun 'gain' = [+?, –?]. It seems that the meanings of some kinds of words --'triangle', 'cube', 'island', etc.-- lend themselves better to be described by this metalanguage, whereas others may not. Moreover, possible connotative dimensions of the words could hardly be accounted for by that proposition. Nonetheless, the ideal of a more reduced vocabulary that might describe all other words keeps driving the efforts of lexicographers and other applied linguists and is encapsulated in the notion of a 'definition vocabulary'.

If the words gained better recognition of their role in relation to syntax by becoming the carriers of combinatorial properties that endow them with prescriptive powers to determine the sentential environment they may appear in, they have also had, on the other hand, their capability of encapsulating meaning submitted to dispute. It seems to be predominantly accepted now in many circles that the meaning of an utterance can not be accounted for solely by the addition of the meaning of each individual word occurring in the utterance. On the contrary, it is as if the meaning of each word would only fully actualize during its relation to the other words around it in utterances (or the whole text at large: think of the title of a book, for instance). Now it is not the word that determines the context, but rather the reverse way. Is it the case that, considering the limited capacity of the language processing device, such semantic flexibility is a kind of trade-off to compensate for that structural imposing nature of the words? Be that as it may, at least some basic, [prototypical?] meaning the words must bear, otherwise we could choose any word to say whatever we wanted.[17]

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16 Cf. the CCELD (COBUILD dictionary): 'a woman who is not married, specially an old or middle-aged woman' (p. 1404).

17 At the very opposite cline-end of a bureaucratic drive to assign a unique and definite identity card to each item, this would characterize a situation of paroxysmal semantic nihilism in which anything would mean anything else depending on the intentions of the interlocutors in their circumstantial game of negotiating meaning. Grammar, the system that relates form to meaning would be meaningless. Any form would convey any meaning. Anything goes! would reign. [it is continues on the next page]

This discussion intends to remind us that relevant theory building still goes on even at the realm of linguistics, which, no doubt, is the peak in the disciplines concerned with language. The place, status and role of vocabulary are not yet settled. Worse, maybe there is not a widely compelling paradigm of language itself, in spite of, or maybe I should say because of, the 'Chomskyan Revolution' [18] and the regular yielding of new theory configurations at almost every five years it is associated with.

Regardless of a seeming lack of sedimentary comprehensive theoretical achievements, however, a lot of piecemeal work dealing with 'vocabulary knowledge and its acquisition' is already under the sun. Let us get closer.

2.2 - Mapping the area

After having seen that issues related to vocabulary in general were identified as a 'neglected area', we then moved to **vocabulary** and its evolving linguistic theoretical

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Notwithstanding this reservation, it is worth referring to some attacks by 'critical linguists' to what they call (after Leech 1974b) the 'bone-structured language' view in which the relations between language forms and meaning are crystallized as the linguistic embodiment of the social power that certain language users (speakers/writers, such as dictionary makers and other language 'authorities') have in coining symbols or prescribing the interpretation of their use. Cf. the criticism addressed by the British feminist linguist Cameron (1985) to *Man-made language* by the Australian feminist Dale Spender (1980) in which she emphasizes creative and sometimes even fumbling uses of words in opposition to highly conventionalized language. Conversely, for a classical primeval defense of 'authorized' coinage cf. the inspired Socratean arguments in Plato's *Cratylus*.

But again, cf. also Rosch's (1975) prototypicality study of native speakers of English in which she found out that people tend to select a specific exemplar from among the different ones that share category membership to best represent the category and act as the referent (robin) to which the superordinate label (bird) that names the category is preferentially associated. As well as Labov's (1973) experiment with tiny changes in the visual representation of similar objects and the resulting shifts of referents, so to speak, from the words 'cup' vs. 'bowl'. Both of which illustrate different attempts in the quest for determining the inherent meaning of words.

[18] Cook (1993) contends that functionalist theories of language have brought about comparatively little impact on the development of SLA theory and research (p. 156).

condition. Now the phrases 'neglected area' and 'vocabulary acquisition' will be coupled together and provide the ground to a vantage point from which to carry out the mapping of the area of V studies in FLL/SLA.

In order to prevent my being at the verge of great confusion and getting into premature unsolvable troubles with so varied and scattered pieces of information as the matters related to VA are (or may seem to be prima facie), both in conceptual and geographical terms [19], I was urged to develop some basic ideas and distinctions as a way of building appropriate schemata to allow further more profitable reading. These were progressively being formed, changed, and adding up until, during the reading of Meara's (1980) article about the 'neglected area', I learned a basic severing idea that then guided my attemps to organize the information relative to VA matters.

The idea to attemp an overall organization of information first came to my mind after reading Meara's (1980) paper in applied linguistics. My attention was called to the proposition of a fundamental cleavage in the mass of works I was grappling with in order to build not only specific knowledge more directly connected with vocabulary and learning or VA immediately related issues, but also with background information so as to build broader anchoring schemata. However, as I mentioned earlier, such distinguishing concern, which is a usual part of the researching procedures, had already caused previous divisions which I was mainly compelled to visualize during the readings of psycholinguistic topics. So I became increasingly aware that it was important to keep in mind a basic trifold division of matters which I labelled VK (vocab. knowledge), VU (vocab. use), and VA (vocab. acq.). It took me a certain time and amount of reading to venture these working and intuitive

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[19] Just to be precise, I have indeed searched for relevant information in more than two dozens of different places --university libraries, city libraries, schools, consulates, etc., inside the town and outside not only the town but the state, and even the country. Even so, I was not always lucky enough to get access to information I either knew from previous reading, or merely suspected, that could be very relevant to the research in progress. On the other hand, there are centers for the investigation of VA-related issues and publication of periodicals also literally scattered throughout the planet (USA, Canada, Britain, Holland, Finland, Israel, New Zeland, to name but a few). It certainly is not easy to gather relevant informantion about these matters and build a minimal working framework of their historical progress to avoid misled and misleading inferences, let alone a state-of-the-art picture of them. In point of fact very few works, I suspect, have attempted to integrate all this knowledge --Mckeown & Curtis 1987 (an edited book on L1 mostly); Carter & McCarthy 1988 (again an edited book this time on L1 & L2); Nation 1990 (L2); McCarthy 1990 (L2); and perhaps Meara 1983, 1987 (L2) even though his works are bibliographies only. However, an explicitly stated unified view is still far from reach now, at least as far as classifications and nomenclatures can suggest. Particularly a bridge integrating Psycholinguistics and Applied Linguistics seems most necessary. Maybe, however, they depend on a yet-to-come fundamental agreement in Linguistics.

analytical categories, perhaps because they seemed not to be always very clearly stated or underlying statements in the literature. [20]

Thus, the umbrella term VK would contain information about the mental store of lexical knowledge: LTM (long-term memory) and semantic memory, and the mental lexicon (ML) specifically; to this psychological category I later added the notion of lexical competence which stems from more immediate applied linguistic purposes instead. The issue of lexical errors is associated to this latter category.

The notion of VK is germane to or becomes more relevant when related to the kindred notion of VU which also involves psychological and psycholinguistic grounds related to lexical processing and working memory, therefore word recognition (language comprehension), or lexical selection (language production). This has to do with knowledge-using processes and/or strategies. This broad category covers basically an area of studies concerned with performance issues which besides the above mentioned aspects also focuses on speech errors (spoonerism, malapropism, etc.).

Finally, VA, the process whereby from VU (since it seems that we have to begin somewhere, then the idea of 'performance without competence', or alternatively, evolving competence) VK is built and consolidated so as to allow higher levels of proficiency in VU again. This involves the processes and strategies for knowledge-getting (paraphrased label, based on Rivers' (1973) distinction between 'skill-getting' and 'skill-using' which I later learned). The related notion of VT (vocab. teaching, which was later subsumed under the broader umbrella 'management of learning') also began to occupy a room of its own, particularly after reading works with applied linguistics concerns. To this third broader category are also associated VG (vocab. growth), VDev (vocab. development) and VExp (vocab. expansion), most of which are types of VL (vocab. learning, both in L1 and L2 guided programs).

As it was pointed out in the previous section, the role, place, status, of vocabulary do not seem to be very firmly sedimented in language theories, and have not been systematically taken as major objects of specific and explicit attention on the part of applied linguists. As a matter of fact, we can come across comments in the literature suggesting that

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[20] It is not unusual to find statements about language use which exclusively refer to production as if language reception were something different. Similarly, when talking about fluency, seldom the idea of comprehension is clearly associated with it; some would even hardly join these terms in a phrase. In psycholinguistics introductory literature or survey reviews it is usual to find the more fundamental triple division of the subjects into language comprehension, language production, and language acquisition topics. Later on, it was very reassuring to me to learn that one very prestigious applied linguist such as Cook (1993) also decided to organize his three-hundred page book about SLA theory and research based on an explicitly interrelated language knowledge-language use-language acquisition framework.

even models of SLA have been designed mostly to account for the acquisition of syntax or grammar morphemes; as to empirical research, Laufer (1990) explicitly notes that, specifically in what regards the developmental route of learning, works concerned with grammar have greatly outnumbered those focusing on vocabulary (pp. 281-2). Additionally, given that condition of a disputed, or neglected area, as well as the considerable mass of topics VA somehow has something to do with, the need to map what might constitute a somewhat separate area became clear to me. This is also in line with studies that suggest, or attest, vocabulary to be a factor in analyses of language knowledge, use, or acquisition: Powers 1982, Yamada 1988, Skehan 1989, etc..[21]

The following two sections below are on a decisive division of matters and the expansion it invited in order to accommodate a plethora of items of information potentially confusing, since interrelated. However, to bear them in mind as separate concepts presumably might also be a convenience helping people interested in language learning issues in connection with vocabulary.

2.2.1- Meara's founding stones

In his famous survey article about the research carried out in connection with vocabulary acquisition, Meara (1980) notes that characteristically two broad areas make up this field: **'management of learning'** and **'learning process'**. The first has as its object 'to decide what words are to be taught', whereas the other, 'to find out how words are actually learned' (p. 329), and he stresses that it is particularly the latter that must be associated with the label 'neglected aspect' of language learning study.

Into the first division (see Fig.1) fall the research areas of **'vocabulary control'** --vocabulary selection based on frequency counts carried out by hand, a method that has

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[21] This fits into the idea of measurability in the lexical competence construct which is then a quantitative concept in opposition to a notion of indivisible linguistic competence associated with the UG view.

predominated since the 1930s till more recently when it was supplanted and continued by the enormous processing capacity of modern computers-- and **'mnemonics'** --techniques for the teaching of vocabulary together with a concern about 'the efffectiveness of different forms of presentation.' (p. 227). However, Meara further notes, they focus on 'the peripheral aspects of vocabulary acquisition rather than the central ones' and 'leave unanswered a large number of questions which are of considerable relevance to our understanding of how vocabulary is acquired.' (p. 227). Moreover, since the 'learning of new words is not an instantaneous process', presentation is not, to say the least, 'the only critical variable involved' (p. 227) in that process.[22]

As to the other division, 'learning process', Meara (1980) assigns 'a reasonably large body of experimental work' that has addressed the issue of 'how bilingual speakers store words in their mental dictionaries' (p. 227). This part is subsequently divided into 'memory experiments' and 'semantic tests'. The bulk of the **memory experiments** has yielded support to the view that L2 words somehow integrate with those of L1 in a complex lexicon instead of favoring the hypothesis of two separate ones, that is, one for each language.

Instead of treating the lexicon as a whole, as the memory experiments did by ignoring the characteristics that words objectively exibit, such as differences in frequency, length, and the like, **semantic tests**, Meara argues, have conversely aimed at relatively smaller areas of the lexicon. One particular trend concentrated only on specific semantic fields, namely colors, and used a modified version of the **Stroop test** of the 1930s, which was originally applied to monolinguals, and has found that the behavior of bilinguals in naming the actual color of a printed word that reads a contrasting color term seemed to vary with proficiency: the higher the subjects' level of proficiency, the closer their pattern of responses got to the relatively higher levels of interference found with native speakers. This was taken as an indication that, as the foreign words get more integrated semantically, the two lexicons of the learner behave as a whole.[23]

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[22] **Input** is one thing, while **intake** is something inherently different from it, as others had already pointed out. (Corder 1967: 165, cited in Chaudron 1985: 2 as the probable original coinage of the term). We may also refer to Skehan (1989: 47), who attributes this original distinction to Corder too (1973, however).

[23] In line with this belief is the view of VA as a re-labelling process: to acquire an L2 vocabulary is mostly a matter of adding a new label --the word phonological and/or orthographic forms-- to an already preexisting L1 concept; if a new concept (genuine L2 concept) is learned, then it is the other way round, that is, an inaugural L2 lexical form labels it, and only then an L1 form relabels it. We can see in Ausubel et al. (1978) an impressive illustration of this view to which the pedagogical recommendations associated with paired-associates techniques based on a one-to-one word translational equivalence fits perfectly. However, the relation between the conceptual structure and the word forms may have to pass through a mediating interface of possibly contrasting L1and L2 meaning structures/semantic levels. From this stems

An easier and more productive method of studying the bilinguals' lexicon and the structure of its semantic relationships, Meara teaches us, is by using **word associations**. The main objective is again to compare the patterns of native speakers responses to those of learners and bilinguals. The basic findings reveal that native speakers consistently show higher measures of fluency (number of responses, speed of responses, etc.) and stereotypicality than does the other group of subjects. This suggests that L2 words are not as well integrated in the bilingual's mental lexicon as L1 ones are and therefore are not so easily accessible. Evidence that better scores are associated with higher proficiency levels is in line with this point.

Variability in connection with proficiency, he continues, is most interesting in that less advanced learners typically produce a large proportion of responses that are primarily motivated by the formal aspects of the stimulus word, particularly its phonetic structure, rather than its semantic properties. The label 'clang associates' is attributed to responses given on the basis of the sound of the stimulus word: 'fight'/'tight'; 'wide'/'white'; etc. Nothing more about this patterning Meara (1980) tells us here, however. Moreover, he does not venture any explaining hypothesis either. Therefore some questions can only arise: is it the case that such predominantly phonetic structural constraining effect in learners' responses is due to test design specifications? How are the stimulus words presented? only orally? only in written form? What about the form of subjects' responses to them? Are learner groups controlled in any other way in addition to their proficiency level, say, according to their immediate learning purposes, either to develop conversational skills or to improve reading comprehension, or else? or still according to their immediate motivation to integrate into the foreign culture, or just driven by instrumental needs to extract useful information, etc.? What is the time alloted to response production? Do any of these variables have any significant effect on that picture? Or is it that learners in their less advanced stages have not yet developed a fully fledged and firm set of 'productive algorithms', so to speak, to connect meaning to form? In other words, is it not possible that learners would still be building procedures to comprehend language, therefore only paving their inner ways to go from form to meaning, instead of the other way round? If so, they would have not yet begun to make available an immediate fast converting device so to speak. So, if this should reveal to be true, then we could speculate that the learners are still grappling in identifying more

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the issue Meara is referring to, I presume. This, however, should not downgrade the relabelling view so as to make it rejectable, for it seems to me that at initial stages of FL learning relabelling is exactly what learners do, because besides their world knowledge (mental encyclopedia, or conceptual structure) all they have to count with, mostly when supportive natural embedding situational contexts are lacking, is their L1 semantic mapping of that knowledge.

confidently words that, due to their physical make-up, particularly their similarities [24], may retard access to meaning by requiring (too many? improper? incomplete? not firm?) strategic differentiating steps.

Be that as it may, what Meara seems to be primarily concerned with is in describing a state of affairs --the unbearably incipient state of the art of the knowledge about VA-- rather than in an attempt to expand or derive knowledge, and in doing that he surveys the field and, most importantly, categorizes major divisions and sub-areas. As to those studies, however interesting they may be, Meara concludes that they still do not offer too much support for 'relevant claims about the storing of second language vocabulary' (p. 239) and are rather unsystematic. Then, together with pioneering questions raised by Levenston (1979), he supplements a series of unanswered questions that he claims might constitute the beginning of a research program in the neglected area. I believe it is worth bringing them in here, because they may help us visualize the 'field'.

> (a) Are there any systematic differences between well known and recently acquired words in a second language? (b) Do newly acquired words in a second language pass through any identifiable stages of acquisition? (c) Is it the case that L2 words ever produce behavior that is indistinguishable from what would be expected with L1 words? (d) Are there any clear thresholds which it is necessary for an L2 word to cross before it can be considered to be properly acquired, and if so, what types of activity lead to these thresholds being passed? (e) How is it that L2 words which are often learned as paired associates of their L1 translations eventually come to operate in a way that is relatively independent of their translation? (f) Is the acquisition of new words affected by such considerations as the morphological structure of L2 words, or their phonetic structure? (g) Are the lexical errors of learners (e.g. malapropisms) systematically different from those of native speakers? (p. 240)

We shall return to these questions later. Now let us note that Meara has not only spotted a neglected area, 'the storing of second language vocabulary' (p. 239), but also provided a seminal geography of the broad field of **vocabulary acquisition** which underlies throughout his article and lends itself to be made explicit. This is, in fact, the reason for this review. Thus, the major areas schematically:

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[24] We may refer to the applied linguistic work of Laufer (1990; 1991) in connection with 'lexical confusions' related to 'synforms' (lexical items which are similar in form).

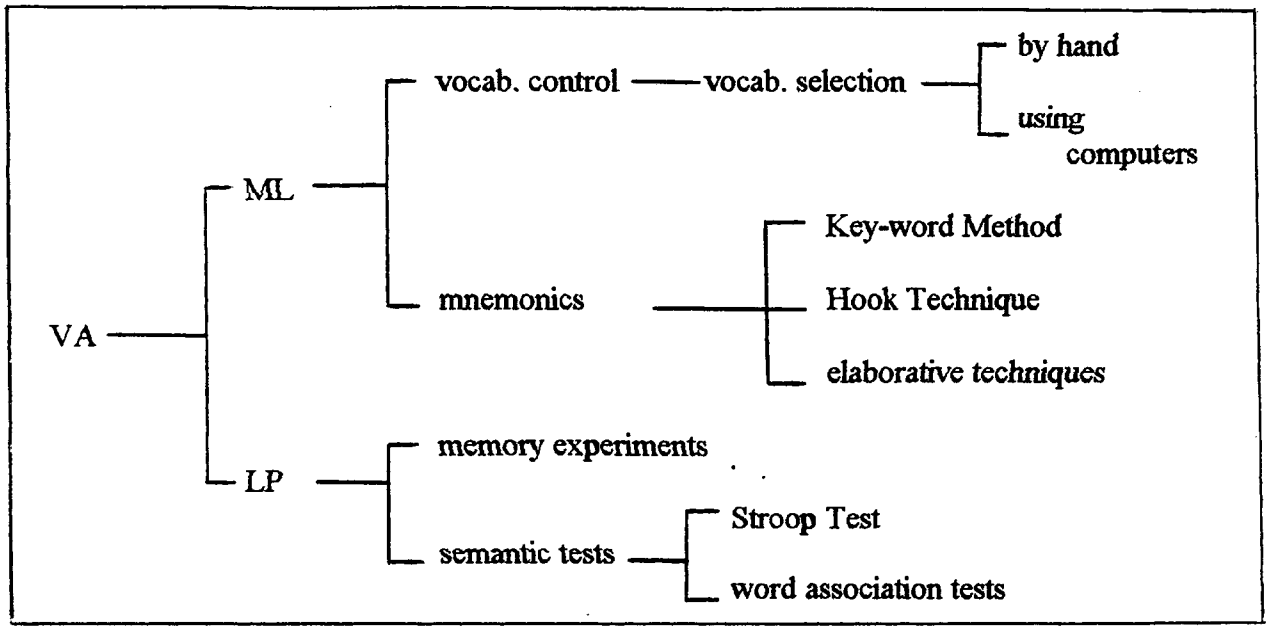

Figure 1. The field of VA based on Meara (1980).

This core notional geography will serve below as the foundation for the building of a scheme of 'areas of interest' in a potentially interconnected applied linguistic field. Now, returning to Meara's questions, what is most striking is that they are indicative of the author's approach to VA via VK: interestingly enough the author seldom does refer to learning or the learner, but mostly to what might happen to the words themselves qua items of knowledge. The majority of the questions is directed towards determining the nature of and possible changes within the mental structure of VK. Meara is mainly aiming at a theory of an L2 mental lexicon, both as an integral part and as a first step of a sort of 'synthetic' view of VA, identified with 'the storing of second language vocabulary' [emphasis added]. Had the author preferred an 'analytic' view, he might have explicitly distinguished the storing (process) from the storage (which may also indicate process, but perhaps is less ambiguous in indicating a state/product resulting from that process). [25]

[25] The *Collins COBUILD English Language Dictionary* (1987) has entries for both the suffix -age and the suffix -ing. The former, we are told, is added to verbs 'to form uncount nouns which refer to processes' (p. 28). Therefore: store → storage. The latter, too, is added to verbs 'in order to form uncountable nouns that refer to activities' (p. 748). Therefore: store → storing. So far we get none the wiser. However, the entry 'storage', which has two senses, lists first 'something that[...] is being kept in a special place until it is needed' (p. 1438). Some words related to this affix are less ambiguous in their reference to things other than processes: 'anchorage' (p.47), 'blockage' (p. 141), 'bondage' [a condition] (p. 150), 'footage' (p. 563), 'package' (p. 1032). Curiously enough, 'mileage' (p. 914), which was not formed from a verb and does not denote any process, nonetheless is not related to any of the two senses associated with noun → noun cases that are presented in the entry '-age' mentioned above.

Moreover, it is as if, in order to have a clear picture of VK as such and then open an area for research, Meara (1980) were clearing up VA from any disturbing variables such as, for instance, those related to learners individual differences (ID) (cf. Skehan 1989): apart from L2 proficiency level, his questions suggest no clear regard to possible relationships to factors as age, nature of L1 background and L1 proficiency (question (c) is not properly the case here; maybe (e) perhaps), knowledge of other languages, learning purpose, learning style [26], etc., all of which might play an important role in the process of VA.

Meara has given salience to a 'neglected area' in the idea of VA, by severing it from a not so much neglected background, though peripheral, and narrowing it down to 'learning process'. It seems to me that if we narrow further down this notion by separating it from VK, then we might glimpse another even more 'neglected area' that was not categorized before: instead of looking at the knowledge structure, that is, the knowledge that is already there in the learner's mind and may be tapped with semantic tests, we have to look at the making of that knowledge. So, rather than a discussion of what is stored and how this knowledge is organized, there remains the issue of developing a picture or narrative of the **learning process** as such: how that knowledge comes into being in the first place.

Meara approaches the process via the state/product resulting from it. A different perspective seems to be suggested for instance in the work of Rivers (1971) and Eastman (1991). They departed from models of the intricacies in NS's use of language, that is process, to arrive at a psycholinguistic working model of the task L2 learners have in developing their fundamental skill of listening comprehension. Maybe we could label their work applied psycholinguistics, as a specific branch of broader applied linguistics. Rivers (1971; or a slightly modified version of it in 1983) even intended to derive from that extension a series of tentative guidelines both for the teaching of listening comprehension as well as for materials design/selection endeavors!

Very possibly Meara is right in putting VK at the departing point of a working route of applied linguistic research in the area, though. Not only VK *stricto sensu*, that is, the psychological dimensions relative to lexical knowledge in learners' minds, but also those derived from linguistic studies that are concerned with the raising of awareness of learning managers by making explicit the different linguistic aspects involved in lexical competence, which are precisely what we find in Richards 1976, Ringbom 1987, and Robinson 1989a

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[26] In addition to 'communicative competence (knowing what to say)' and 'linguisitic competence (knowing how to say)', some authors even consider the effects of a 'personal competence' and include in the picture of FLL the knowledge of learning techniques and the ability to make use of, or modify, them for different tasks such as vocabulary memorization, etc.(cf. Stevick 1982: 18ff; not to mention the many other authors specifically concerned with 'learning strategies').

(see further on Ch. 3 a discussion of the issue of lexical competence). Also very possibly, though, a full picture of the process of VA will have to integrate intricate psycholinguistic loans: Eastman (1991) in focusing on L2 listening comprehension early steps has provided an interesting idea. Is it not possible to direct a similar focus on VA?

In a sense, the 'neglected aspect' then may still be further narrowed down. In fact, the most part of what Meara calls "vocab. acquisition" refers to the knowledge structure, that is, knowledge that is not in the making, on the contrary, it is already there in the learner's mind, his/her mental lexicon for that matter. So, rather than a narrative or a picture of the learning process as such, that is, the acquisition of knowledge proper we have a discussion of what is stored and how this knowledge is organized. These two aspects are what word association studies are designed to tap, whereas vocab. acquisition analysis *stricto sensu* should not look at knowledge in the mind but rather focus on how such knowledge gets there in the first place. It seems to me that Meara has neglected this aspect of vocabulary acquisition, the very primeval events in the process proper and preferred to analyse the results of the process instead, because of his attention to the process in broader terms. He is not so much interested in the presentation variable as we saw before. He looks for the problem somewhere else: **in** the learner. But then he jumps to the other end. Meara does not look at knowledge coming into being, he looks at knowledge being there. Certainly, as he puts it, acquisition of word knowledge is not a question of all or none, therefore attempts to find out what is there in the mental lexicon and how it is laid down there is part of the picture/task. They might provide a synchronic portrait (do they?) of bits of knowledge that are still evolving. Lexical competence, as we shall see later, involves several dimensions and different levels of knowledge in each dimension; this applies to each different word someone knows in any language. I dare insist, however, that the real issue has perhaps still remained in a dark area.

2.2.2 - A working scheme of the 'field'

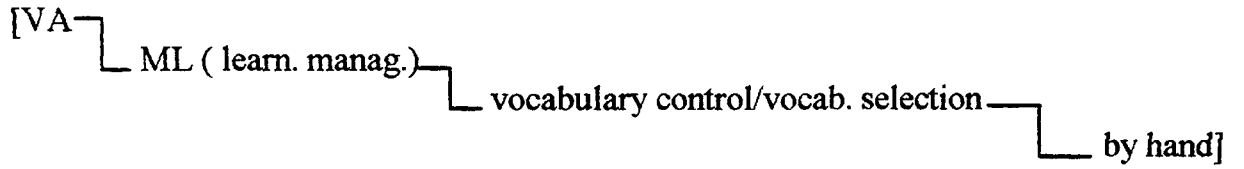
Perhaps most relevant in Meara's paper is that it not only reveals us a neglected area in a field in which a considerable amount of research work has been done for decades, but also provides a primordial conceptualization of such a field.

Even if Meara's paper suggests a glimpsed 'field', he was not trying to map a new possible geography, though. Rather his prime aim was to draw attention to an unbearable situation in which the psychological aspects related to the mental structure of knowledge of FL words was not receiving sufficient attention. However, in order to do that he had to separate the wheat from the tares and thus put forward the fundamental cleavage with the very felicitous labels 'management of learning' vs. 'learning process', both of which reveal a perspective from the vantage point of learning. Another point that should be highlighted is that, *lato sensu*, VA covers VT issues as well.

Inspired by Meara's ideas and preserving his fundamental divisions but extending its parts by either subsuming relevant areas under already unfolded umbrella terms, or conversely generating superordinate terms to cover already presented concepts or still venturing relevant new ones, I ended up with a reasonably networked scheme, whose explicit presentation is the reason for this section.

It is worth stressing that this expanded scheme was not born out of a fully extensive and judiciously systematic survey of certainly a huge number of works in the literature, even if such number could have been reduced to account for only those landmark works (which of course would have to be previously identified), because of the many areas of work involved in the 'field'. Rather it might serve as a provisional set of working notional guidelines for that more extensive and systematic survey, as a way of both organizing initial information and overviewing areas of work and possible interrelatedness among them. On the other hand, the scheme is neither speculatively conceptual, nor is it a patchwork of ideas picked up here and there. It resulted from preliminary, yet cumulative, bibliographical search aiming at the discovery of recurrent major notional and factual relationships within the broad VA issue.[27] It is basically a piece of applied linguistic work that stems from practical problems of language learning concerns.

So, departing for instance from already given branches like:



taken from Meara's original proposition (cf. Fig. 1 in Section 2.2.1, p. 58), I arrived at this initial step:

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[27] It stems from a 'distillation' of the reading of various works. Notably among these are Palmberg 1987, Greene 1986, Carter & McCarthy 1988, Klein 1986, Ellis 1986, Cohen et al. 1986, Ringbom 1987, Newmeyer 1988, Gregg 1986, Garnham 1985, Clark & Clark 1977, Richards et al. 1985, but also many others.

[VA (vocab. acq.)—┐
└— ML (*management of learn.*)—┐
└— **preparation of input]**

in which 'preparation of input' is a superordinate term that covers that antecedent branch. Thus inspired by the scheme derived from Meara's article (Fig. 1), I generated the notional cartography that follows and in which are put together concepts that I either found explicitly stated in the literature (particularly applied linguistics works dealing with factors either internal or external to the learner engaged in VA) or inferred and was driven to believe they contributed to a better understanding of problems in connection with VA.

This way, departing from that fundamental division, we may arrive at a mother chart (see Fig. 2) whose two expanded branches bring us to, first, what we may have under the label of **Management of Learning**: topics in connection with the Reasons for the teaching (and learning) of vocabulary; plus the Tools which we need to resort to in order to meet the ends prescribed by the task decided when dealing with the Reasons, on the one hand, and the appropriate choices relative to the Provisions of Input, on the other.

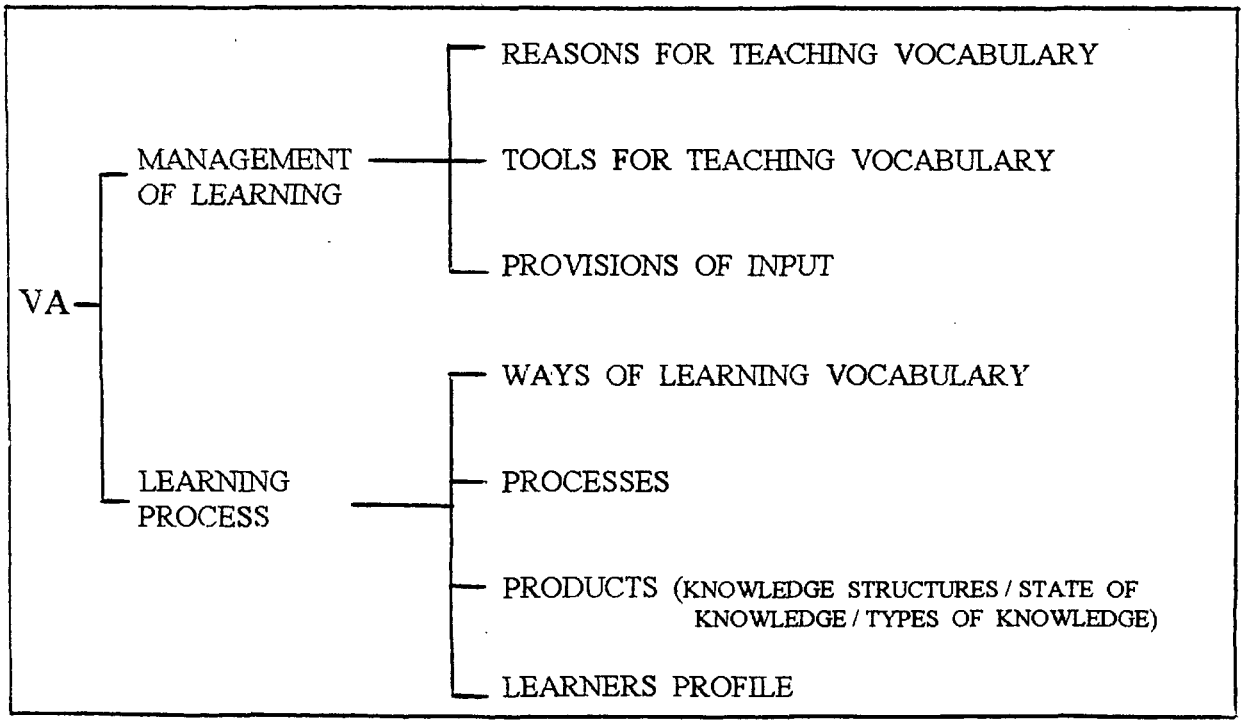

Figure 2. Modified scheme of the field of work in **Vocabulary Acquisition**.

The next main branch, labelled **Learning Process**, covers four areas: the different Ways by which we may acquire vocabulary, the awareness of which might play a positive role in VA undertakings; the psychological Processes that may take place in the learner's mind when noticing the input items of language and finding storage for them in such a way that it allows subsequent use; and the Products of the processes, that is, the knowledge structures that result from them. These three categories intermix intricately with a last one on more concrete levels of analysis: the Learner Profile, with special emphasis on his/her age group (child vs. adult, basically), learning abilities, knowledge of the world, and previous language knowledge.

From this mother chart, the dividing activity may go further down to levels increasingly more concrete.[28] Therefore, **Management of Learning** and **Learning Process** may constitute different charts of their own, and so forth.

Management of Learning, as the name says, refers to the work concerned with the organization and control of factors (materials, means, etc.) external to the learner proper which in some cases may be done by the learner him-/herself, but which are usually undertaken by professionals. It covers several subdivisions (see Fig. 3). First, the topics and areas of work in connection with the **Reasons** for the teaching (and learning) of vocabulary --the debate on whether vocabulary can be taught (Rivers 1981: 462-470), the general importance attributed to the various aspects of lexical proficiency (cf. Section 1.2 above) and the 'size of the task' (Nagy & Herman 1987: 19), as well as the consideration of the learner's purposes and needs. Decisions taken at this step presumably have logical precedence over the next two ones and necessarily affect them. Such subsequent activities are related to the other two sister branches: the studies, choices, or supplies of both the Tools and the Provisions of Input.

Under the general label **Tools** are the mediating items and devices that may be utilized in the learning process, in accordance with the reasons determined for the teaching/learning of vocabulary and the different types and conditions of input. It includes the different kinds of media, instruments, techniques and activities useful and adequate to meet the requirements of any specific learning undertaking.

Provisions of Input denotes the preparation and organization of vocabulary samples that fit strategic presentation demands and learning purposes, as well as the activities related to the evaluation or the assessment of the input available to the learner or the different results obtained from the uses made of it.

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28 As a matter of fact, this job could end up in real case studies.

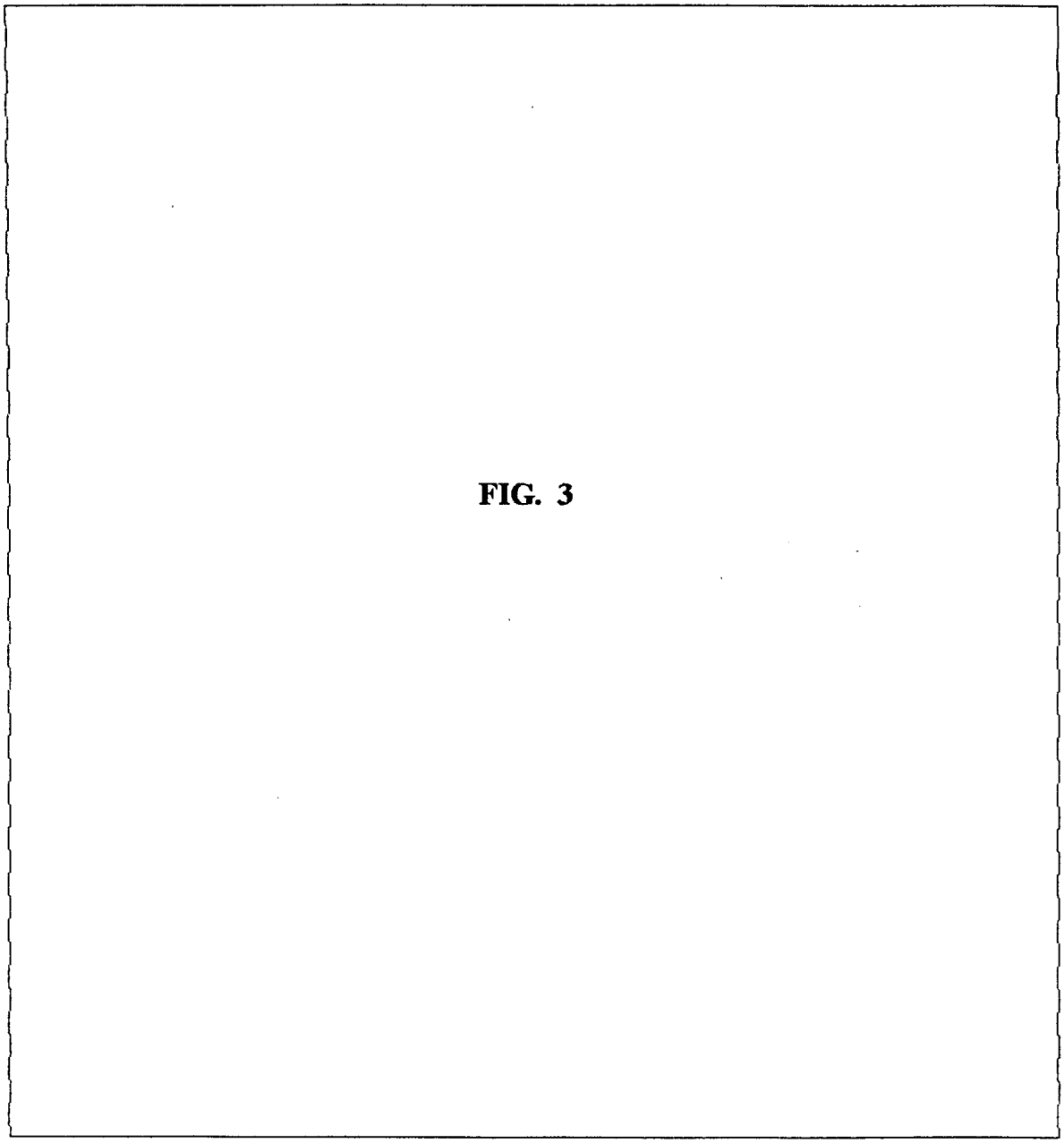
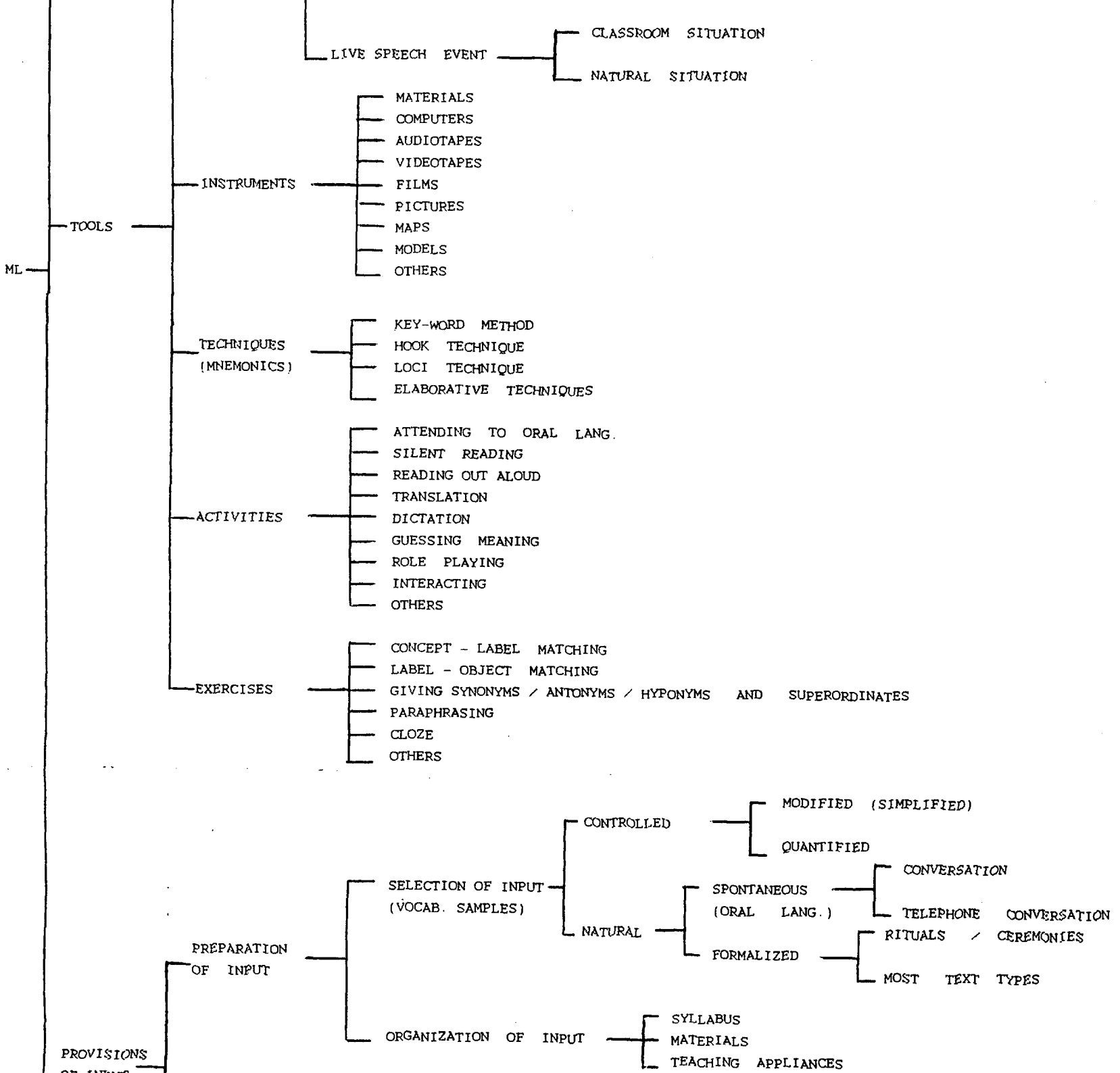


FIG. 3


ML
TOOLS
INSTRUMENTS
MATERIALS
COMPUTERS
AUDIOTAPES
VIDEOTAPES
FILMS
PICTURES
MAPS
MODELS
OTHERS
LIVE SPEECH EVENT
CLASSROOM SITUATION
NATURAL SITUATION
TECHNIQUES (MNEMONICS)
KEY-WORD METHOD
HOOK TECHNIQUE
LOCI TECHNIQUE
ELABORATIVE TECHNIQUES
ACTIVITIES
ATTENDING TO ORAL LANG.
SILENT READING
READING OUT ALOUD
TRANSLATION
DICTATION
GUESSING MEANING
ROLE PLAYING
INTERACTING
OTHERS
EXERCISES
CONCEPT - LABEL MATCHING
LABEL - OBJECT MATCHING
GIVING SYNONYMS / ANTONYMS / HYPONYMS AND SUPERORDINATES
PARAPHRASING
CLOZE
OTHERS
PROVISIONS
PREPARATION OF INPUT
SELECTION OF INPUT (VOCAB. SAMPLES)
CONTROLLED
MODIFIED (SIMPLIFIED)
QUANTIFIED
NATURAL
SPONTANEOUS (ORAL LANG.)
CONVERSATION
TELEPHONE CONVERSATION
FORMALIZED
RITUALS / CEREMONIES
MOST TEXT TYPES
ORGANIZATION OF INPUT
SYLLABUS
MATERIALS
TEACHING APPLIANCES

The other expanded chart refers to the broad **Learning Process** cover. Like the previous one, this chart presents many subdivisions (see Fig. 4). First, the **Ways** of learning vocabulary which is a manyfold category as well and involves the basic **modalities of VA** (incidental learning and intentional learning); the different kinds of **learning experience** the learner may engage in (face-to-face or mediated interactional experiences with more knowledgeable persons or with different kinds of peers versus more individualized ways of experiencing new knowledge of vocabulary either when studying words directly and explicitly, or somewhat casually while performing other tasks such as reading, etc.); and the **metacognitive strategies** the learner may resort to either to get new knowledge (increase vocabulary funds) or to improve the use of, or test the validity of, knowledge already stored, thus consolidating and automatizing it, or restructuring it, according to that which experience indicates best. These categories are not mutually exclusive, on the contrary, they always coexist.

The **Learning Processes** (more stricto sensu) by which VA events take place find a room in the second main branch in this chart from which stem five psychological processes. **Intake** labels the different attentional, perceptual, and memory steps that we as learners take in focusing, selecting, and internalizing bits of lexical input that turn into a part of one's VK. It might be an umbrella in itself. [29] However, divide and conquer is a must here. So, next to intake and as a separate division, there may be **Retention** which covers the various kinds of processes associated with the storage of VK (from the very short-lived internalization of bits of lexical input, as if only a fugitive means to a transitory end, to long-term storage of information that may even gain a condition of pratically permanent residence in memory; however, the common loss of both those items that could only be briefly stored as well as those more durable that nonetheless owing to various reasons, sadly undergo attrition and forgetting, also relates and contrasts to these [30]).

When bits of VK input are successfully stored[31], they may lend themselves to **Retrieval** processes that cause either their recognition, as when the learner is able to receptively identify them only if they are presented again to him/her, or their recall if the

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29 See Chaudron (1985) for a discussion of the many sequential dimensions intake can assume not only when it is viewed as a process, but also when the product made up by the results yielded in its different steps is taken into account.

30 This category and the next coming one only refer to psychological events, therefore anatomical or physiological drastic changes were not taken into account during the elaboration of the scheme. Presumably they would not change it in a fundamental way, though they might (hopefully) add illuminating neurolinguistic support at least.

31 Those knowledge structures that can only be accessed via hypnosis present no interest as far as lexical proficiency is concerned (cf. Gregg 1986).

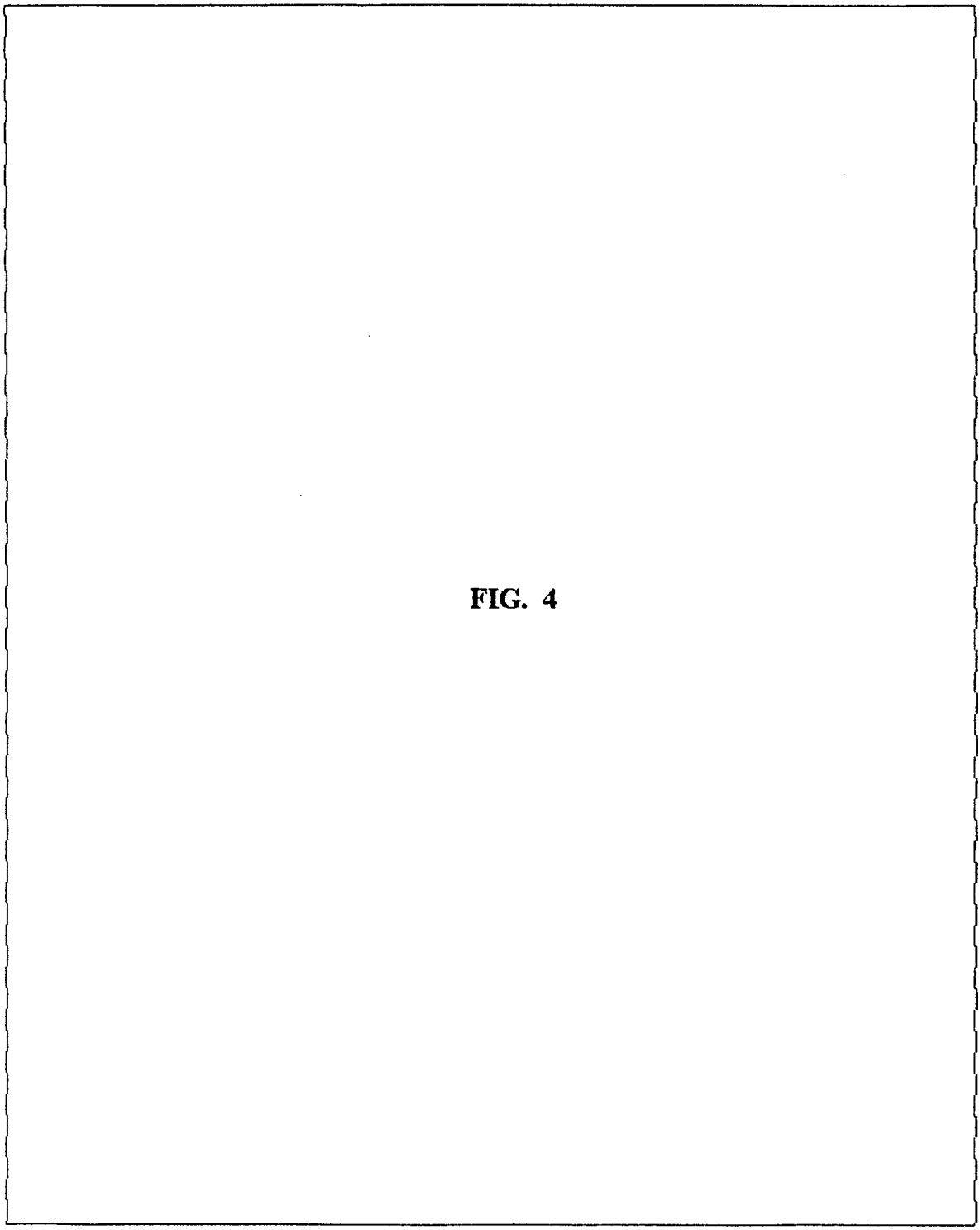
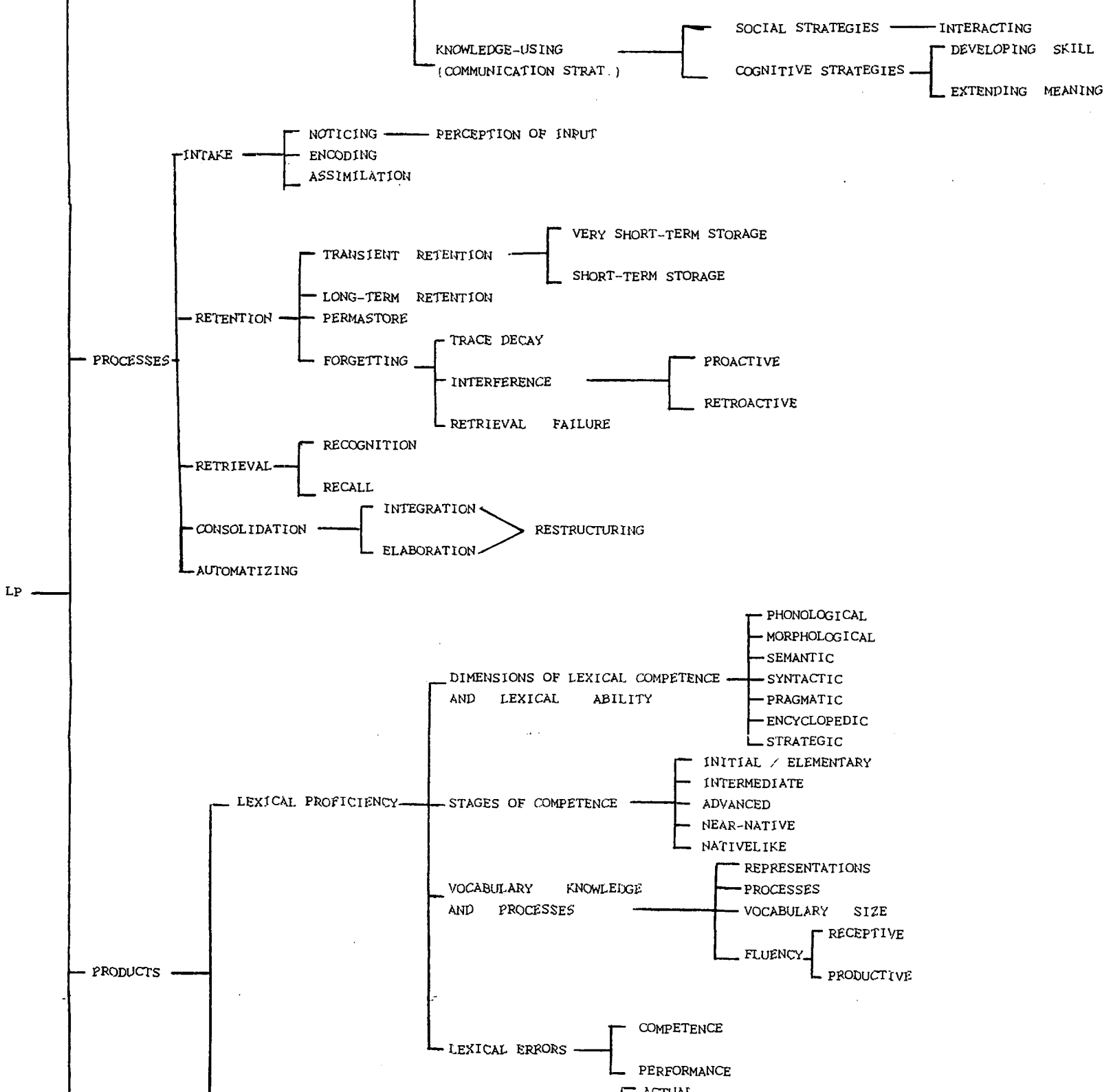


FIG. 4


KNOWLEDGE-USING
(COMMUNICATION STRAT.)
SOCIAL STRATEGIES
INTERACTING
COGNITIVE STRATEGIES
DEVELOPING SKILL
EXTENDING MEANING
LP
PROCESSES
INTAKE
NOTICING
PERCEPTION OF INPUT
ENCODING
ASSIMILATION
RETENTION
TRANSIENT RETENTION
VERY SHORT-TERM STORAGE
SHORT-TERM STORAGE
LONG-TERM RETENTION
PERMASTORE
FORGETTING
TRACE DECAY
INTERFERENCE
PROACTIVE
RETROACTIVE
RETRIEVAL FAILURE
RETRIEVAL
RECOGNITION
RECALL
CONSOLIDATION
INTEGRATION
ELABORATION
RESTRUCTURING
AUTOMATIZING
PRODUCTS
LEXICAL PROFICIENCY
DIMENSIONS OF LEXICAL COMPETENCE AND LEXICAL ABILITY
PHONOLOGICAL
MORPHOLOGICAL
SEMANTIC
SYNTACTIC
PRAGMATIC
ENCYCLOPEDIC
STRATEGIC
STAGES OF COMPETENCE
INITIAL / ELEMENTARY
INTERMEDIATE
ADVANCED
NEAR-NATIVE
NATIVELIKE
VOCABULARY KNOWLEDGE AND PROCESSES
REPRESENTATIONS
PROCESSES
VOCABULARY SIZE
FLUENCY
RECEPTIVE
PRODUCTIVE
LEXICAL ERRORS
COMPETENCE
PERFORMANCE

learner can also access, activate, and bring back to attention those VK structures at his/her will.

Two other processes also depend on successful retention and they make up the final divisions of the learning psychological processes involved in VA. The first one is the **Consolidation** of lexical intake which occurs over time.[32] It is worth bearing in mind that VA is simultaneously a process of both item-learning and system-learning achievements. Not only in that each item has multiple relations (synonymy, antonymy, hyponymy, homography, homophony, whatever) with the others in the broad lexical system it belongs to, but also in that each item in itself relates to many different systems of the language (phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, etc.). Borrowing a sister taxonomy for a metaphor of classification and function: vocabulary items are somehow like parts of larger constellations with their own fixedness and movement, nonetheless they still are affected even by the forces of their distant surrounding ultragalactic co-members. Consolidation refers to both integration and elaboration. [33]

Integration is the progressive construction of a unit of knowledge representation in the mind, say a lexical entry in the learner's mental lexicon, made via successive and cumulative gains that bit by bit add constituent information to an incipient, poor, unstable structure that evolves, when adequate input is provided, until its essential features are put together, say the founding bits of phonological or orthographic information are chunked ending up in a functionally unitary structure of representation: the word form.[34] Whenever

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32 See Palmberg (1987: 203) for the hypothesis on whether some (but not too many) vocabulary items get firm and definitive residence in the mental lexicon on the first encounter the FL learner may have with them; or refer to Meara's questions (a), (b), and (d) in Section 2.2.1 above (p. 57). Still on this issue, Bahrick and colleagues (cf. Bahrick & Phelps 1987) have found that FL items of word-pairs which were met on an optimum distributed practice basis both for the encoding (two presentations) and access (at 30-day intervals) were most likely to attain higher scores of retention with a life span of over 8 years, therefore definitely reaching beyond the 5-year base mark which was set as a criterion to the achievement of 'permastore' condition. As to incidental learning modalities, Saragi et al. (1978) suggest that about 15 (10 as a minimum) different contextualized encounters with unknown or as-if-foreign items during the reading of a novel --60,000 word-long *A clockwork orange* by Burgess-- were necessary/sufficient to bring about acquisition for NSs; the reading was at home in either just a sitting, or three days at most)

33 We can refer to Mandler (1985: 38, 68-9, 97, 102) to a discussion about this basic distinction between 'integrative and elaborative processing' in cognitive theory from a perspective of schema psychology.

34 This picture seems to hold validity even if we consider the typical early SLA situation in which the learner, apparently in the reverse way, is confronted with undistinguished oral masses of language input, or chunks, which eventually are analysed into their constituent lexical items, but behave very much like items themselves. The problem is that these initial chunks are ungrammatically ill-integrated items, or maybe I should say pre-integrated items. So, as knowledge progresses, the real items are brought about

these (proto-) structures are activated they get even more integrated, that is, they qualify more and more clearly as distinctive units. These units may then join sister items to integrate new larger units. Most importantly, '(...) The more integrated a structure is, the more easily it is retrieved as a unit'. (Mandler 1985: 103).

Elaboration names the other element in the consolidation process. It refers to the interconnecting of already existing unitary mental contents in networks: whenever a unit is activated in a new environmental context it is activated together with [35] other existing structures which are relevant to the learner's experience that is taking place in that particular context; with repetition of such contiguous or concurrent activation the units affected become linked to each other. Most importantly again: the greater the number of linkages, the more routes will be opened connecting different mental contents, and the greater the number of alternatives for accessing / retrieving those units of information. The most frequently activated connections may gain precedence over the least ones, thus popping up with greater probability the next opportunity co-linked items be activated.

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along with their system (phonology, morphosyntax, collocational preferences, etc.) membership specification.

In a somewhat symmetrical fashion, but again in accordance with what is said above in the main text, a (well kown) 4.5-year-old orphan boy who in grappling with his L1 (BrP) VA, after several exposures to input, arrived at these founding Gestalten (protoforms/configurations) for items such as 'Curitiba' and 'McDonald's' (cases of proper-noun learning which here involve even more troublesome words related to foreign-language naming --aboriginal Indian language for a city name we visited and English for a fast-food restaurant one, respectively): 'Corutiba' and 'Maquidonoros'. Very possibly departing from (confirmed) already available items/groups such as 'coru [couro] do sapato' (shoe leather stuff), 'coru ['coro', mistakenly interpreted as 'couro'] da igreja' (church choir vs. church leather), 'máquina-de-lavar' (washing machine), and 'maquiagem da mãe' (mother's cosmetics). The early building of such mistaken items by the child possibly was driven by available as-if morphemes, coincidentally occupying word-initial position as well as the insertion of a vowel sound after consonants in non-final positions not in accordance with the Portuguese lexicon, but close to the characteristically adultlike rendering of the sound pattern of BrP (cf. the dialectal (?) 'adevogado' for 'advogado', 'peneu', for 'pneu', etc.). As to the ending of 'McDonald's', nothing similar could exist in his young little mental lexicon, particularly at a time in which more fundamental morphophonological battles with 'unfriendly' phonemes and diphthongs would still resonate in products as 'troncole', 'preda', 'vrido', and 'Tio Gério', instead of the regular adultlike 'controle' (remote control), 'pedra' (stone/rock), 'vidro' (glass), 'Tio Jairo' (Uncle Jairo).

[35] Or otherwise may motivate or cause this/these other item[s], if not existent, to come into being, which equals to learning a new item. In that connection, cf. Adams (1982) for a discussion of the potentiality that blanks (not yet developed slots that are nonetheless logically called for by the inherent organization of the schema structure in order to achieve its completion) have in motivating VA events. Incidentally again, this vocabulary learning possibility applies quite well to, and seemingly brings a positive answer to, the question raised by Tomitch (1988)(cf. Section 1.1, p. 29) about whether her fruitful prereading schema-activating vocabulary activities could also be related to VA gains.

Consolidation implies restructuring: whenever a new item of knowledge is assimilated, it pari passu requires a change in the memory internal conceptual structure it is anchoring into.[36] Internally driven restructuring, on the other hand, may happen when the learner reflectively gives attention to her/his own knowledge structure, independent of any occasional direct external input, and, in analysing it, decides to introduce changes and thereby rearrange it. This may also bring new knowledge to his/her conceptual structure. For instance, the learners may know the words 'car', 'bus', 'bicycle', 'vehicle', however in their mental lexicon 'vehicle' is a co-hyponym of 'car' (= motor car), then all of a sudden they notice some oddity in expressions such as 'motorized vehicles'. This strangeness may lead them to presume the possibility of 'non-motorized vehicles'; in doing so, they ipso facto generate new knowledge in their mental lexicons, and an ex-synonym has turned into a superordinate --'vehicle'. Thus, their mental lexicons have been restructured even without an immediate direct impact of an external item.

Finally, the last of the relevant learning psychological processes: **automatizing**. As the two previous ones, it also crucially implies retention, but it depends on consolidation as well. It has to do with fluency --ability to make use (not only productive, but also receptive) with ease of already stored knowledge-- and is essentially synonymous to the memory skill of putting language knowledge to use. Building VK ends when consolidation is complete; conceptually [37], the next step involves activating already existing items again and again, and via this repeated (whether deliberate or incidental, it does not matter) activation turn those structures in a condition of easy triggering retrieval. It is procedural in nature, notably in developing speaking skills with all their psychomotor complexities.

Psychological and psycholinguistic processes are also interesting in that they bring about specific products. So, it is justified to put them together in this chart under the general umbrella of Learning Process. Two main branches may be distinguished in **Products** -- Lexical Proficiency and Types of knowledge.

Lexical Proficiency --the ability to use lexis accurately and appropriately-- involves both lexical competence (and pragmatic and strategic abilities), an applied linguistic notion, and vocabulary knowledge and processes, which may be taken as psychological concepts. **Lexical Competence** is in itself a multidimensional concept which involves different

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36 See Ausubel et al. (1978).

37 Not only conceptually, but also in some proposals for initial FLL practice, particularly those which claim that 'speaking may be hazardous to [the learner] linguistic health' and accordingly suggest a more or less long 'silent period' for building initial knowledge of language forms and system (and use too), which is to be based solely on activities involving language comprehension. Cf. the work of well known applied linguists who have championed this: H. Winitz; J.O. Gary; N. Gary; V.A. Postovsky, among others.

aspects --phonological, morphological, semantic, syntactic, encyclopedic, pragmatic, strategic, etc.; the different stages of competence ranging from the very lacunary of beginners to the high-level achievements in many of those previously mentioned dimensions that characteristically more fully-fledged bilinguals reach --initial and elementary, intermediate, advanced, near-native, and nativelike. On the psychological counterpart, ***Vocabulary knowledge and processes*** are blanket terms covering, on the one hand, the stores and organization of representations of lexical information in the mental lexicon and semantic memory, and on the other hand the access and selection of items as processes in lexical use. The notion of vocabulary size, which is the repertoire of words a person can only understand or also use productively [38], has to do with the quantitative side of their mental lexicon, that is, the number of lexical entries they possess; whereas the level of automatization achieved with those kinds of knowledge, either as receptive or productive modalities, refers to fluency. Finally the lexical errors that learners make, be they of competence or performance, are issues included under proficiency too.

Types of knowledge may be viewed from three different aspects. One refers to the actual or potential existence of a word in the learner's mental lexicon; the other relates to the nature of VK, that is, either to words that can only be recognized or those that may also be used productively; and a last one has to do with the condition words have reached in a person's mental lexicon --which/how many words are familiar (items often heard, seen, or used otherwise by the person), available (items that readily come to mind whenever a category of concepts or an area of world experience, situations, that is, cause the activation of associative meanings), or barely accessible.[39]

The final main branch under this broad LP chart belongs to the **Learner Profile** whose variables point to fundamentally conditioning factors that stem from the various

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38 Richards et al. (1985) refer to estimates for a native educated person the figures of 100,000 words and 10,000 to 20,000 respectively, while for learners of FL of intermediate level of proficiency they refer to estimates of 5000 to 10,000 and 3000 to 5000 words respectively (pp. 3-4). However, what was counted as a word is not stated. More on this issue in connection with native speakers of English cf. Chall (1987: 7ff); Nagy & Herman (1987: 20-7); as to EFL/ESL learners cf. Nation (1990: 11-2, 189).

39 We may refer to Richards (1970) for a discussion and an experiment about availability and familiarity of words as useful concepts to complement that of word frequency as a criterion for vocabulary selection designed for pedagogical purposes. However, it is worth remembering here that it seems that psychologists --E. Tulving, Z. Pearlstone, S. Oler, among others (cf. Gregg 1986: 159 ff)-- have different meanings for similar labels: 'availability' refers to the state of those items of information that have been successfully stored, so there were no decay of trace, nor inhibition of retention. However, if there is no 'accessibility', that is, the ability to get hold of those stored items back, then it is as if, in the first place, they were not retained at all.

(transient or permanent) biological [40], social, psychological, and linguistic categorizations of each individual learner. These variables unquestionably affect, and interrelate with, practically all the already mentioned factors.

In addition to serving as a guideline to move across the field, this step towards organizing a preliminary 'notional cartography' of the work in the area, tentative though it may be, can also enable the generation of a base of terms to capture basic conceptual distinctions. Some of which, it should be noticed, do not really represent dichotomies; at most, just the opposing terms of a scale. It goes without saying that each one of these categories may further be broken down into minor divisions with more detailed information at more concrete levels of analysis.

To recap: 'Management of Learning' includes the areas of work dealing with the preparation, application, and assessment of the means, input, media, instruments, techniques, and activities to promote, or achieve, vocabulary learning together with the reasons for doing all that. Thus it covers the what, how much, what for, (how), to whom, by whom, and why in VA, that is, it refers to those decisions and activities that deal with factors mostly external to the learners. As for the branch 'Learning Process', it comprises everything in direct connection with each particular individual learner-internal dynamic aspects involved in getting word knowledge and developing control in the use of such knowledge, as well as matters related to the structure of vocabulary knowledge in the learners' mind. So it is mainly the area of **how** vocabulary learning takes place. Sometimes the separation of the two broad areas is not as clear-cut as we might presume. This becomes apparent when we consider the works of many authors, viz. Laufer (1990; 1991), Robinson (1989a; 1990), to name just a few, which often have to do with interrelated issues of both areas. This is the main reason why Meara's implicit proposal is so felicitous.

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[40] Though females consistently score higher in FL/L2 general proficiency tests, there is at least one study (Boyle, 1987) showing that male learners outperform female learners only in certain tasks (comprehension of heard vocabulary), but it seems that in general the variable sex is not a major one in ID (individual differences) in FLL matters. As a matter of fact, the belief (presumably shared by men and women alike) that females are more proficient in FL or L2 is not uncommon (particularly in Brazil). So, it seems that females are inclined to speak more, while males are better listeners... However, this apparently contrasts with Coulthard's (1991) remarks on (L1) gender differences in the (social and cultural) use of language.

CHAPTER THREE

LEXICAL PROFICIENCY

Having opened a conceptual room with the working schemes above (Section 2.2.2), I may now procede my exploration and get into a fundamental issue that every undertaking related with V in FLL/SLA somehow has to consider: lexical proficiency, that is, that which results from, but also allows, the building of VK so as to gain lexical competence, hereafter LexC, and increase skills and abilities either to use known words accurately, appropriately, and fluently, or to cope with knowledge gaps and try to obtain new knowledge from this.[1] So, how this K is put to use in comprehension or production of the TL, or more importantly, how it is acquired, are issues logically dependent on a discussion on what this K is in the first place.

[1] It might be sound to keep apart the two labels, LexC & VK, until we learn of a theory that can subsume under a single account both the problem-solving ability and the language acquisition faculty/ organ/ device/ ability/ capability/ whatever/ that seem to be needed to cover a concept of VA, the unsaid sore subject/ bone of contention/ of portrayers of FL or L2 acquisition.

3.1 - Some basic notions and terminology

But first, an attempt at a terminology. Knowledge basically refers to information represented in the mind (the stored contents in long-term memory).[2] Ability is that which enables us to accomplish actual use of K, or to cope with lack of such K, in accordance with the circumstances. Acquisition is the process of internalizing information and K as well as developing ability and skill. Use, either receptive or productive, of acquired or already existing K is what happens in our interaction with the environment.[3]

VA is the acquisition of lexical knowledge, that is, it is the process of gaining VK. While VK, as it is the resulting product of VA, it is a psychological notion that corresponds to a part of the learner's (as well as the bilingual's, or the native speaker's) mental knowledge *structure*.

LexC is a concept that we can find in AL (applied linguistics) works (Richards 1976; Ringbom 1987; Robinson 1989a; among others). It certainly is derived from LING (linguistic) studies concerned with the general theoretical aspects of the vocabulary of human languages as well as the description and analysis of the lexicon of any particular language. However, as an AL notion, it is mainly designed to fulfill practical aims of all those involved with SLA/FLL --researchers, practitioners, even learners themselves. So it is biased towards specific purposes and may even bear some traits of contention (cf. the work of Robinson (1989a) who somehow puts forward a breakthrough proposition). LexC is intricately related with LingC (linguistic competence), which is also disputed as a part of the broader ComC (communicative competence).

LexC involves knowledge of items (lexical items) and knowledge of rules (lexical rules) that may be derived by generalizing perceived formal and semantic relatedness among already known items.[4] But it has also a psychological and psycholinguistic counterpart: VK

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[2] K might be synonymous to competence. However, depending on the theory of language and the theory of mind architecture, it seems that it might also be (partially) lodged somewhere else and not just in the semantic memory part of long-term memory. K seems to be a more neutral term, while competence seems to restrict its reference to types of K that share some important specificity and are crucial for specific types of behavior most relevant in human environments. As Note 1 above might suggest LexC is VK as seen from a linguist's perspective. When we move to cognitive psychology, psycholinguistics, and other-area topics related to words, VK is preferred.

[3] Cf. Valian (1981) for a very rich, though brief, discussion of the relationships between different kinds of K and the ways of acquiring them.

[4] Cf. Adjémian (1983: 253), and Olshtain (1987: 221-2, 230-1).

(vocabulary knowledge). This notion refers to the knowledge structure in the minds of language users (speakers/ hearers/ learners/ bilinguals) in connection with LexC, that is, their mental lexicon and semantic memory.

LexC is VK, but it is not observable behavior. Rather it is designed to account for the underlying knowledge that allows actual behavior. In other words, it is opposed to the concept of performance, which is closer to proficiency. LexProf (lexical proficiency) involves not only of course LexC, that is, VK, but also the skill in knowing how to use this VK accurately and appropriately and achieve fluency together with an ability to strategically and fruitfully face circumstances in which VK proves defficient.

Lexical skills and abilities enable vocabulary learners and vocabulary users, both of them with different degrees of success, to activate and make proper use of already existing K on the one hand, and to resort to retention aids as well as to compensate for gaps of specific K of words by bridging them via inference or guess, on the other. Such ad hoc compensatory and more or less umpredictable remedial operations are cognitively very complex and may require the search for, detection, and orchestration of many different relevant information sources and information items. Worse still, in addition to such requirements, their results may initially at least be contaminated with uncertainty and anxiety. Consequently, many a learner would show some reluctance in developing them and resorting to them.[5]

The main characters in the drama we are concerned with are the items of VK, or lexical items which is a label akin to 'lexeme', but perhaps a little less 'technical', and also more rigourous than the common, but less precise, 'word'. What is a word is an issue that often occupies a central part in works aiming to introduce matters related to V in FLL/SLA (*cf.* McCarthy 1990; Carter 1987; Carter & McCarthy 1988), or in lexicographers' choices in designing dictionaries, as well as in those studies concerned with determining people's vocabulary size when deciding on what to count as a word is a necessary preliminary.

The terms presented above belong in a family whose best umbrella is 'lexical proficiency'. I believe that, in approaching V in FLL/SLA, a discussion of that broad notion is an introductory convenience; besides, it seems that there is not any abundance of works on that. As a matter of fact, not any work especially dedicated to this issue is referred to in currently most known pertinent literature. Therefore it is the subject of the coming section.

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[5] Cf. Laufer, B. & Bensoussan, M. (1982); Bensoussan, M. & Laufer, B. (1984); Laufer, B. & Sim, D.D. (1985); etc. Hence the recurrent proposal that they should be fostered and even taught: Twaddell (1973), Rivers (1968/1981), Kruse (1979), Clarke & Nation (1980), and others.

3.2 - Lexical competence and lexical proficiency

A notion of what constitutes LexC has been proposed by applied linguists as basically a lodestar for those engaged in VT (Vocabulary Teaching). On the other hand, I presume it is not at all impossible that an awareness of the task lying ahead the learners may positively affect their learning process, however indirectly, particularly when this process is to come under the major responsibility of the learners themselves, and mostly if we think about the 'size of the task' and decide to turn vocabulary into a skill in its own right as it has been proposed by many (Twaddell 1973, Judd 1978, Clarke & Nation 1980, Rivers 1983, etc.) who for various reasons claim that vocabulary can not really be taught.

One of the most prominent names associated with the rebirth of the importance attributed to V in LL (language learning) is Richards (1976), whose work signals a change of interest from that old majesty of the input, inherited from the lore of the 1930s and embodied in word lists, frequency counts, etc., towards the learners and their needs. He has advanced an analytical proposition of the K involved in LexC as a guideline for those engaged in VT in which he called attention to the many dimensions in the task of VL (Vocabulary Learning). In doing that he went much beyond the traditional concern with frequent items.[6]

Richards' founding LexC analysis offered an answer to the crucial issue: what does it mean to know the vocabulary of a foreign language?

Basically, it means to get as close as possible to the native speakers' competence. Richards (1976) lists eight assumptions [7] regarding the K referred to as "LexC", that is, the kinds of K a speaker is presumed to possess if he/she is to be said competent in what words are concerned. In a somewhat paraphrased form, here are they.

1. The native speakers' K of words expands into and throughout their adult life. Differently from grammar whose major fundamental rules are mastered at a relatively early age, VA is lifelong and involves getting acquainted with a huge number of items. Even though a precise measurement of this K is difficult to determine, some average estimates have been suggested: the vocabulary that children entering elementary school (about 5 years of age)

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[6] Richards (1970) had already introduced in applied linguistics concerned with V two other concepts, availability and familiarity (cf. p. 70, and p. 70 n. 39 above), to counterbalance that of frequency as complementary criteria for V selection for pedagogical purposes.

[7] Cf. also on this Carter & McCarthy 1988: 44.

can recognize includes about 2000 words; the seven year olds', 7000 words; the number reaches 14,000 by the age of fourteen (Watts 1944). As to adults, the vocabulary size may vary from 10,000 for non-academic persons up to 100,000 words for college students and professional scientists (Mackey 1965). Impressive as they are, these capabilities of recognizing the meanings of words, however, cover only a part of the lexicon of the language (English, Portuguese, for instance) which amounts to more than 500,000 words. An average person makes use of an estimate of only 2000 spoken words in everyday conversations. However misfitting these numbers might be, they nonetheless allow us noting that K grows with age and gives us an idea of the 'size of the task'.[8]

2. Knowing a word means to know the degree of probability of encountering it in speech or printed language and the sorts of words most likely to occur associated with that word. Based on intuition alone, native speakers can judge words as more or less common and familiar, and this way classify with great accuracy the degree of frequency of the word: they know teacher is more common than educator, or even instructor. Besides that, they can also predict which words can most probably occur in the same immediate linguistic context; for example, for car we might expect to encounter powerful, new, etc., while for tea, strong, fresh, etc. (Since there are so many words, knowing those which are more common is quite valuable an asset in negotiating meaning in communication; cf. below pp. 83 ff.: K of collocational phrases, or words that frequently co-occur in phrases, helps production).

3. Knowing a word means to know its limitations of use due to variations of function and situation. Depending on the constraints imposed by the situation, the speaker's choice of

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[8] More recently, Moe (1974) estimates that 6 year olds understand the meaning of and can use about 6000 words. Compared to Watts (1944) numbers, and provided that they are measuring similar things, then from the fifth to the sixth year of age children enlarge their word stores three times as much. If this is really so, then this certainly is the vocabulary explosion age!

Goulden et al (1990) refer to estimates for university graduates (NS of Eng.) of about 17,000 base words (base forms, or free morphemes, or roots, or stems) from a universe of about 58,000 items, most of which are unknown by NS of Eng. (p. 356). Whereas Carey (1978) says that around 6 years of age, the average native child knows about 14,000 words (this figure includes inflected and derived words), or about 8000 root words (p. 264). As to FL learners (Finns), Takala (1984) has studied the VK of 16-year-olds after seven years of English at school and he arrived at the following estimates: for fast learners around 1500 words; for average students, 900; and for low learners about 450 items. Takala's numbers express little difference between productive and receptive VK. Possibly, elsewhere in the literature, we may find references to greater numbers of FL/L2 words learnt in comparatively shorter periods; two anecdotes readily come to mind: the fast foreign-language training of American military personnel before entering the theater of operations in World War II, or one that perhaps is more specifically related to the growth of lexical knowledge: Lozanov's 'suggestopaedia'.

words varies. Thus, due to temporal variation, the current word mirror would have to be replaced by the old-fashioned looking glass in describing a victorian scene.[9] Geographical variation possibly would restrain a British speaker from using the informal fag (cigarette) if he were in the USA where this word is often used offensively to refer to a homosexual. The social classes in which the speakers share similar socioeconomic and /or educational background also impinge a social variation on their use of words, for instance, in a British middle-class context it is preferable to use lady for woman. Native speakers also select words according to the mode of discourse, that is, while some words are suited for spoken discourse, the written mode may require substitute words.

4. Knowing a word means to know its syntactic behavior. The knowledge of a word is stored as a concept plus the associated structural and grammatical properties it may have, e.g. the transitivity patterns of verbs. So for give it is [S+V+O (OD+OI)] as in the sentences John gives the book to Mary or The club gives 5000 dollars to the campaign. (This fits well into Robinson's notion of 'valency' and the UG researchers' 'projection principle'; cf. above pp. 45-8).

5. Knowing a word implies the knowledge of its underlying form and derivations. In learning a word we also learn its morphological properties and the possibilities of word formation associated with it. Thus, from the underlying form walk we may easily get to the regular inflected forms walked, walking, walks. From the base form solid, we may derive solidity, solidify, solidly, solidness, consolidate. These examples illustrate some possible ways through which semantic characteristics can be reproduced by derivation from the base form of a word.[10] (Not only the base form, though. Adjémian holds that even affixes carry particular meanings which may help predict, therefore cut down a number of hypotheses, certain semantic properties of a new item, in addition to class membership, etc. in syntactic ones, when the base form is unknown (1983: 253-4). In a similar vein, Olshtain (1987)

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[9] Cf. the Standard Brazilian Portuguese word beque which still used to be an unchallenged part of the football (soccer) register by the time the FIFA World Cup was held in Brazil and the ensuing years with the now prevailing zagueiro).

[10] In this connection, cf. Leech's (1974b: 210ff) discussion on the relative lower productivity of lexical rules vis-à-vis grammatical ones and the tension between the diverse possible forms which can be generated by the mere application of different rules of word formation and the various constraining 'degrees of acceptability' the built words might face when introduced into someone's use of the language. In a somewhat similar vein, Sinclair (1989) refers to the native speaker's intuition of language 'naturalness' besides mastery of 'well-formedness'. So it seems that a 'feeling' about the limits of rule application would also be an integral part of lexical competence.

additionally upholds that 'a repertoire of word formation devices for extending the existing lexicon' is an integral part of a person's 'overall linguistic competence' (221)).[11]

6. Knowing a word implies knowing its place in a network of semantic associations with other words in the language. Words do not exist in isolation, and we apprehend their meanings through the understanding of the relationships they establish among themselves.[12] Recurrent similarity in the response-words given to the same specific stimulus-words by different subjects who participate in word-association tests has revealed strong patterns of typicality among the associated words in a particular community of language users. These patterns are indicative of how VK might be organized in people's minds and they presumably help or speed up the appropriate access to the best fitting word in the context where comprehension or production is taking place. The following examples were gathered in Slobin (1971) and Deese (1965):

STIMULUS	COMMON RESPONSE	KIND OF LINKAGE
(1) wet	dry	by contrast
alive	dead	" "
born	die	" "
careless	careful	" "
(2) blossom	flower	by similarity
(3) animal	dog	by subordinative classification
apple	peach	by coordinate classification
table	chair	" " "
spinach	vegetable	by superordinate classification
cabbage	vegetable	" " "

[11] Olshtain (1987) in fact criticises Richards' perspective on LexC which, differently from Adjémian's proposals, seemingly is restricted to focusing on **knowing a word** and neglects 'wider scope rules' that 'go beyond the individual word' (222).

[12] Instead of seen as the association of meanings in a person's memory, such relationships are also captured as a part of the system of the language by different authors in different ways and labelled accordingly. Leech talks about 'meaning relations' and 'semantic relatedness' to refer to 'synonymy', 'antonymy' or 'meaning exclusion', 'hyponymy' or 'meaning inclusion' (1974b: 99-102). Lyons (1980 [1977]) describes the 'relações de sentido' ['sense relations']. Cruse (1986) retakes the work of many pioneers and presents a bunch of 'meaning relations', or 'types of semantic relation', or 'sense relations', or still 'lexical relations', from a rigorous, though not mathematically formalized, contextual view of word meaning, within which it could almost be impossible to talk about 'relations' between 'lexical units'; but there they are: the antonymy (cf. (1) above), synonymy (2) , hyponymy (superordinancy) (3), meronymy (which Lyons presents as 'relações de parte-todo' ['part-whole relations']: *mouth - face*; *wheel - car*; etc.), etc.

(This relates to 'associative meaning', that is, the different meanings that pop up in a person's mind triggered by the stimulus-word).

7. Knowing a word means to know its semantic value. Words present different dimensions of semantic value. To know a word entails knowing its semantic components [13], whose combination with those of co-occurring words bring about restrictions on the usage of the word. Thus, we can not say 'the table was hurt', because 'hurt' only applies to words that have the component 'animate'; we then say 'damaged', instead. These minimal semantic attibutes of a word make up the conceptual denotative dimension of the word semantic value. Besides that, subjective values are also attached to the connotative dimension in the meaning of words. This might be particularly elusive to foreign learners who lack the fundamental native speakers' experience of acquiring a mother tongue at home, an environment rich with diverse affective factors arising from the natural familial group dynamics. A word for certain groups of speakers might be emotionally loaded as a function of the attitudinal relationships between parents and siblings, and among the siblings themselves, their affectionate bonds, rivalries, etc.
Still another point in addition to the plain conceptual dimension in the word semantic value: some words carry built-in judgment of value --shy, effeminate, sentimental, cliché, etc. are used showing disapproval, conversely famous, old, modern, style, etc. convey an approving idea. (The different kinds of meanings the words are related with: conceptual, connotative, affective, etc. Cf. Leech 1974b).

8. Knowing a word means to know many different senses it is associated with. Words have a 'central' or 'core' meaning [14] on which further shells may attach as a contribution from the context in which they are being used. Furthermore, some words may even bear contradictory definitions: scan may mean either to glance at quick, or to scrutinize. Another fact about the effect of context in specifying meaning: one may read unionize in a particular way when dealing with Chemistry-related matters, or in a quite diverse one if the issue has to do with labor relations; not only does the meaning change, the phonological form does too in this case, in spite of homogeneity in the spelling structure. (This relates to the issue of what to count as a word, to homography, etc., but also to the crucial role of context).

Richards has designed a fundamental framework for the idea of LexC. Notwithstanding this, he does not really seem to intend to achieve a very detailed or fully

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[13] Cf. a discussion above about semantic features (pp. 49-50).
[14] Cf. Caramazza & Grober's (1976) study of the English word line and the idea of a 'core meaning'.

exaustive description of the many kinds of assumed K in his analysis of LexC. His explicit aim is to basically call attention to the magnitude of the task in learning the vocabulary of a foreign language at the same time that he suggests ways of establishing differentiated objectives which can be related to particular techniques of VT aiming at those different aspects of VK. Nonetheless, provided a basic idea of LexC be put forward, it then becomes possible to further relate it to new contributions or changes.[15]

We may gather from the work of Ringbom (1987),[16] whose name is strongly associated with the recent history of studies of V in FLL/SLA from an AL perspective and who has also dealt with LexC, some more points for an answer to the issue of what it means to know an FL V. Even though he draws from Richards' paper (among other authors'), he is not so much interested in a model of the native speaker's competence as if derived from linguistics alone, rather he clearly brings to focus psychological dimensions as well. Thus, we are beginning to move to a broader idea of LexK, one which is already, though almost tacitly, encompassing aspects of learners' memory access mechanisms in performance.

Ringbom of course profits from other people's more primary studies related to SLA theory and research in general, but since he is principally engaged in lexical works I therefore think we may accept his book as a primary source. By subsuming V to existing broader concepts he starts up his axiom-like founding move this way:

> The two different types of competence, linguistic competence and communicative (or pragmatic) competence [1] can both be subsumed under the umbrella term "linguistic knowledge". However, L1-learners vary a lot in the speed and efficiency with which they are able to retrieve appropriate knowledge. This variability in the **control** mechanism should be distinguished from **knowledge** (control is applied to both linguistic and pragmatic features). (1987: 24)

1. Cf. Cummins (1979) distinction between basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS) and cognitive/academic language proficiency (CALP). (Ringbom 1987: 31)

[15] As a matter of fact, many authors have addressed LexC either as a continuation of this founding proposition (see below Ringbom 1987), or as a counterpoint work (Olshtain 1987), attesting its historical relevance.

[16] Ringbom, based on the fundamental principle of learning --relate the new to the known-- is in fact primarily concerned with cross-linguistic similarity between L1 & L2 & L*n* (L3, L4, ... , L*n*) (which he opposes to and considers more important than the study of differences, typical of early Contrastive Analysis) and he sustains that in SLA studies this has been most explored in relation to lexis. So here he relates the study of similarity to the analysis of VK (1987: 35).

K refers to the **representations** of the linguistic structure in the learner's mind, while control to the **procedures** for accessing and retrieving such K. Control becomes more effective as the retrieval procedures get more automatized, thus lowering the requirement for conscious attention and allowing attentional resources to be re-allocated to other parts of the task performance. Control accompanies fluency via repetition of use.[17] The acquisition of control and that of K are affected by different factors. There may be items of K in the mind which nevertheless can not be successfully accessed because the retrieval procedures necessary to bring them to use have not been achieved owing to lack of practice, which though not sufficient is a necessary condition. Ringbom is mainly concerned with acquisition here, so he does not bring to focus the possibility that such retrieval procedures, once acquired, be nevertheless affected by factors stemming from stress, fatigue, etc. and fail.

In addition to this distinction between K and control which Ringbom explicitly declares to have drawn from Bialystok & Sharwood Smith (1985)[18], he also brings to the area another pair of useful concepts: **dimensions** and **levels** of lexical K.[19] Knowing a word is not a matter of all or none as erroneously it seems to be commonly considered by many a learner. Rather, LexK (L1 or L2) involves knowing a word in different dimensions (at least six, he says), each along a continuum from the lowest level, or no K at all, to the top level of (theoretical) full K.

In Figure 1 I reproduce Ringbom's scheme, because in fact he does not work on those concepts more explicitly.

Ringbom, however, adds that even highly proficient native speakers have gaps in their LexK --they not only absolutely ignore lots of words, but also do not know all the possible meanings of many words known to them. As to non-native speakers, they rarely may reach top level at many continua for every item, though highly proficient L2-learners may learn more words than many natives would know. Not all known words are accessible to productive use, more often than not most of these mental representations can only be

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[17] Here 'control' is synonymous to that which enables successful retrieval. For other psychology-oriented applied linguists, though, 'control' usually means the opposite of automatic phenomena. So, in the latter case, it then refers to what is either strategic, or voluntary, or conscious, or requiring attention.

[18] Ringbom states this is similar to Ryle's (1949) distinction 'knowledge that' vs. 'knowledge how', which he paraphrases as declarative knowledge and procedural knowledge. However, Bialystok (1981: 33; and Bialystok & Sharwood Smith 1985: 104, 116 n. 2) herself rejects any relation between her concepts and cognitive psychologist Anderson's (1976: 116ff) pair 'declarative knowledge' and 'procedural knowledge' which are also inherited from Ryle.

[19] Cf. Ringbom 1987: 35ff.

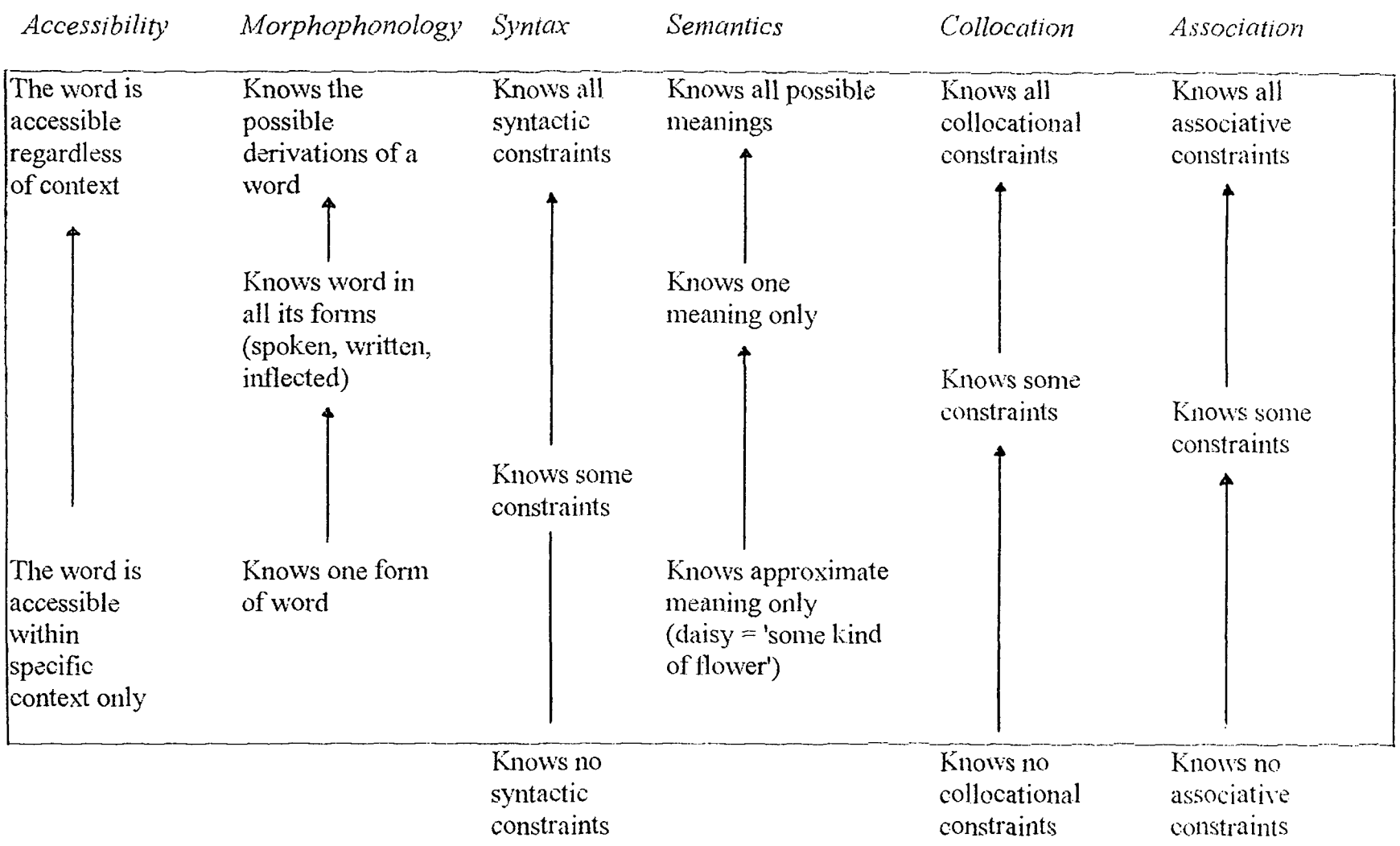

FIGURE 1 *Lexical knowledge* (Reproduced from Ringbom 1987: 37)

activated if tokens of them are presented as a stimulus from the outside. Similarities with L1 may only help at earlier stages up to the middle of the continua; after mid-level position, the learner has to rely solely on his L2 K, states Ringbom. For comprehension, which presumably occurs before production, reliance on previous L1 K, either on morphological similarity, and/or on semantic close translational equivalence, makes it easier to process new items. So for Portuguese-speaking learners to understand the English words 'similar', 'mental', 'items', 'etc.' is an immediate achievement (except perhaps for the pronunciation of those words, since the impact of pronunciation might only be crucial in oral language understanding), while 'table', 'bus', 'wind', 'belief', 'happiness', for instance, are presumably more quickly graspable than, say, 'sophomoric', and like words which bear distinctive cultural markedness sometimes up to a parochial level.[20]

I firmly adhere to Ringbom's belief that 'the morphological and the semantic dimensions (...) are probably more basic than the others' (1987: 36) [21], but I also suspect that basic syntactic categorization goes among the very primitive information about a word even in the comprehension modality of VK: is it possible to minimally understand any meaningful bit of language without identifying its nominal dimension and the subject of predication, that is, that which is being talked about? Moreover, Ringbom suggests that LexK is a set of systems, so that the scheme frames item learning as well as system learning. Many authors indeed sustain learners' lexicons develop as their overall K of the TL progresses.

If Ringbom's LexK is already biased towards the inclusion of procedural factors ('control' of necessary access mechanisms enabling the use of stored K) , with the richly macrolinguistics-fed idea of 'LexC' put forward by Robinson (1989a) we get to explicitly highlighted aspects of ability: VK plus 'vocabulary skills' (as it had been recommended by Twaddell (1973) and many others) . Moreover, this time we are getting further down into concreteness in that his applied linguistic proposition aims at leading learners to a sort of threshold stage of learning after which the students would be prepared to procede mostly by themselves in respect to VA matters. Robinson's proposal is inherently connected with principled selection of input, in that it recommends the K and use of a certain kind of lexical items.

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[20] Cf. the COBUILD dictionary, which was designed to work as a learners' tool as well, for the relinquishment of assigning an entry to 'sophomore', let alone 'sophomoric'.

[21] This fact is captured in the scheme in that these are the only dimensions (besides number-one 'accessibility') whose null K level are represented within the scheme itself. The other dimensions' are represented below the bottom line of the frame and this suggests they are not so crucial to the existence of LexK at a minimum basis.

Based on Canale & Swain's (1980) and Canale's (1983) analysis of FL/L2-communicative competence into its 'underlying systems of knowledge and skills' [22], Robinson (1989a) implements a framework for the lexical component of it by distinguishing two 'dimensions' of VK: declarative K and procedural K. DK is knowledge 'that' words have particular meanings and PK is the set of procedures we engage in to 'achieve' that DK, it is knowledge 'how' to negotiate lexis in communicative interaction.[23] We should bear in mind that Ringbom's notion of 'procedural K' refers basically to 'control', as he calls it, that is, automatized retrieval, or fluency, whereas Robinson's also has a definite strategic sense.

This distinction is further developed in a more extended paper, in which Robinson (1989b), drawing from Winograd (1975) and Faerch & Kasper (1984), explains: DK is the 'taxonomic', 'static' K of rules and items of a language; conversely, PK is 'process-oriented', 'dynamic' in that it involves the selection and combination of parts of DK which are drawn in relation to the specific goals of the communicative event and to cope with the constraints of language use in real time processing.

Two types of words are associated with those two 'dimensions'. 'General' words and more 'specific' ones. Robinson (1989b) preferably focuses on the former and adopts the idea of a 'core', basic vocabulary in FLL: words that are highly context dependent in that they have very little content or interpretable lexical meaning in isolation, have no strong association with any particular schema or frame of reference, therefore are potentially useful to convey a wider range of meanings (wider 'meaning potential'), or have a greater 'coverage' of possible contexts of use. The least straightforward intrinsic lexical content is the price these words pay to trade off greater gains in communication value . Because of those properties above, such words are endowed with a 'procedural' (strategic) value either

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[22] Canale (1983) improved the original 1980 three-component proposition and identified the following four components of communicative competence:

1- Grammatical competence which includes the mastery of 'vocabulary, word formation, sentence formation, pronunciation, spelling and linguistic semantics' (p. 7).

2- Sociolinguistic competence, referred to as 'the extent to which utterances are produced and understood appropriately in different sociolinguistic contexts depending on contextual factors such as status of participants, purposes of interaction, and norms and conventions of interaction' (p. 7).

3- Discourse competence, involved in the mastery of rules of cohesion and coherence of groups of grammatical forms and meanings in talk and text.

4- Strategic competence, concerned with verbal and non-verbal ways of compensating or preventing communication breakdowns that may be caused by insufficient competence or performance troubles.

(cf. Hornberger 1989: 215-6; as well as Fouly, Bachman, and Czico 1990: 2; and Robinson 1989a: 277).

[23] Robinson is primarily considering spoken interaction, but his notion of 'LexC' may cover other contexts as well.

in the overcoming of breakdowns in communication (communicative strategic value) or in negotiating the meaning of the other type of words --the more specific ones-- and via lexis acquire grammatical k (learning strategic value as a means for further V expansion and language development in general).

Robinson, instead of emphazising the traditional development of DK of words in FLL, whose importance he nonetheless does not downgrade, prefers to call our attention to the procedural dimension of VK so as to design a richer idea of 'LexC' and overcome a situation of relative neglect that had already been noticed by McCarthy (1984). Robinson notes that there are two different ways of meaning that typically underlie any negotiation: 1) fixing, asserting a meaning, by either explaining what is being meant, or finding the 'right word' to express it, in an 'attributive' manner; and 2) breaking down what is said into smaller and more assimilable units, by paraphrasing, explaining, giving definition, in an 'assimilative' manner (1989a: 275). The meaning being asserted and fixed is the DK, whereas the procedural dimension of 'LexC' has to do with the ability to select simpler, general words that may fulfill the particular ad hoc value required by the context of situation so as to achieve the assertion of that static piece of K, by taking into account constraints such as the participants shared K (common ground K of elemental vocabulary), etc. Thus, resorting to DK of sense relations and exploring synonymy, the adjacency pairs below might be meaningful and illustrate Paul's K of the 'equivalence' a general word may assume in an ad hoc replacement of specific items.

'And what about Paul? --I told him to get the ball.'
'<u>What</u> did you do, Paul? --I bought the ball. No one told me to <u>steal</u> one.'

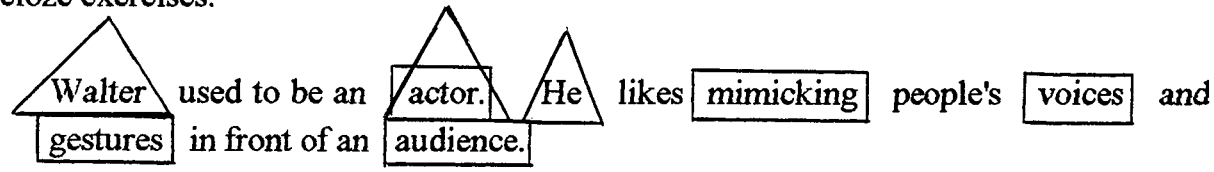
Compared to this, the traditional notion of LexC, Robinson (1989a) points out, is restricted to a 'Vocabulary-as-product' view, which is associated with the rote memorization of word lists. LexC is reduced to its DK dimension. The lexicon is a 'storehouse' without a 'storekeeper'. At the limit, the learners might run the risk of indulging themselves in some kind of psittacism and use language somehow like parrots do. Lexical fetishism. There is no concern with the ability of profiting from the 'delexicality' [24] of general words which may

[24] Cf. Sinclair and Renouf (1988). In fact, in this work these authors only focus on 'delexical verbs' (common transitive verbs like *give*, *have*, *make*, *take*, *put*, among others) which have a tendency to usually collocate with certain particular nouns and adjectives. 'In general, the more frequent a word is, the less independent meaning it has, because it is likely to be acting in conjunction with other words, making useful structures or contributing to familiar idiomatic phrases' the authors teach (p. 153). Robinson borrows their idea and extends its utility potentially to the whole lexicon, but more emphatically to the class of nouns.

assume ad hoc meaning in fluctuating contexts, even though conversely they may also require, both in the attributing meaning and the inferring meaning modalities, that their low lexical content be counterbalanced by agreed-upon procedures.

To concentrate only on the DK dimension of LexC, Robinson (1989a) proceeds, would be appropriate solely in dealing with those highly specific words which have no utility whatsoever in defining other words, but on the other hand have very distinctive meaning independently of particular contexts, are associated to more specific fields, and so require little more than the K 'that' they have a certain fixed meaning.

If I may say that Richards analysed LexC into its components mostly from a LingC perspective and then divised pedagogical activities and exercises in connection with their developement, somehow similarly Robinson also sets forth vocabulary activities and brief guidelines to expressly feed the checklisted dimensions of ComC by Canale and Swain. So, apart from the already highlighted strategic dimension, he also devises another fertile ground for the use of 'procedural' words in discourse. Based on Hasan's (1984) distinction of two properties of coherence in text --'chain of identity' which embodies co-reference to a text-internal topic (represented by the words in triangles in the example below) and 'chain of similarity' which links words that are related in world or schema K, therefore express semantic relations not specific to the text (words in rectangles)-- Robinson (1989a) points out that general words typically occur in identity chains, while similarity chains depend more heavily on K of specific vocabulary, and that both lend themselves to the design of cloze exercises.



Robinson has explicitly supplemented communicative-competence dimensions to our notion of 'LexC', but maybe it is still promising to further turn to those who really have to grapple with its intricacies, I mean the people involved in testing K, even more so those who examine testing procedures and beliefs. According to this presumption, Chapelle is the one who may present the most complete picture.

Chapelle (1994: 163-7) adopts an 'interactionalist' definition of 'vocabulary ability' [25] according to which performance depends both on the characteristics of the learner (K, processes, and strategies) and the characteristics of the context. What makes Chapelle's work most interesting, therefore, is that she really attemps to explicitly design the most complete

[25] Now the label 'LexC' is overtly left behind to favor the replacement by a more appropriate one: 'ability'.

construct. Her scheme encompasses three major components (cf. Figure 2) which she derives from the work of Bachman (1990) who, for more than a decade now, has been publishing papers on communicative competence theory and research and proposes a construct of language ability with three components:

- language K (competence) & fundamental processes in accessing the K
- context of language use
- 'strategic competence' to control the two other components (assessing contextual situations, setting goals, designing plans, and controlling their implementation)[26]

Somehow our course gets condensed here in this account, as if Chapelle had been following the route beginning predominantly with LingC (Richards), then moving to processes to access internalized K (Ringbom) and finally fully incorporating the strategic ability to manage gaps and put available K to use in context (Robinson).

The context of vocab. use, that is how she labels her first component, is to account for the constraints 'the context of a particular situation within a broader context of culture' (Chapelle 1994: 164) impose on the qualitative range of choices any particular language user may make in language performance.[27] This somehow refers back to Richards' third assumption, but here the constraints are many. Following Halliday's (cf. Halliday & Hasan 1989) theory of context, she notes that vocabulary may differ depending on the field of discourse, tenor of discourse, and mode of discourse. The field constraints account for what is possible depending on what is taking place in what environment or setting, what is being done, and what is being talked about or topic. The tenor ones have to do with the people participating in the communication event, their age, sex, social status, etc., the sorts of (institutionalized and fixed, or provisional) relationship they entertain among themselves, and their aims. Finally, the mode, or the part language is called for to realize in the situation, how language is organized to pass the message in a structured whole, the genre of discourse in which the language is being used, and the channel.

So, accordingly, the learner's use of vocabulary will differ, for instance, if he or she goes to a fashion show in a theater (or, better still, is watching it on TV), or is reading a newspaper at home, or listening to a biology lecture in the college classroom. For instance,

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[26] This seems most similar to Robinson's idea of a 'storekeeper' to supplement the view of the lexicon store and who (?) would be in charge of putting K to use as well as organizing, maintaining and actualizing storage (changing, replacing, or inserting new info., etc.) in accordance with the demands determined by the use of the stored items: their frequency, degree of context-dependency, etc. (1989a: 276).

[27] Such contextual variability of vocabulary is precisely what makes Robinson's (1989a; 1989b) 'procedural ability' and 'procedural vocabulary' all the more useful in FLL, however.

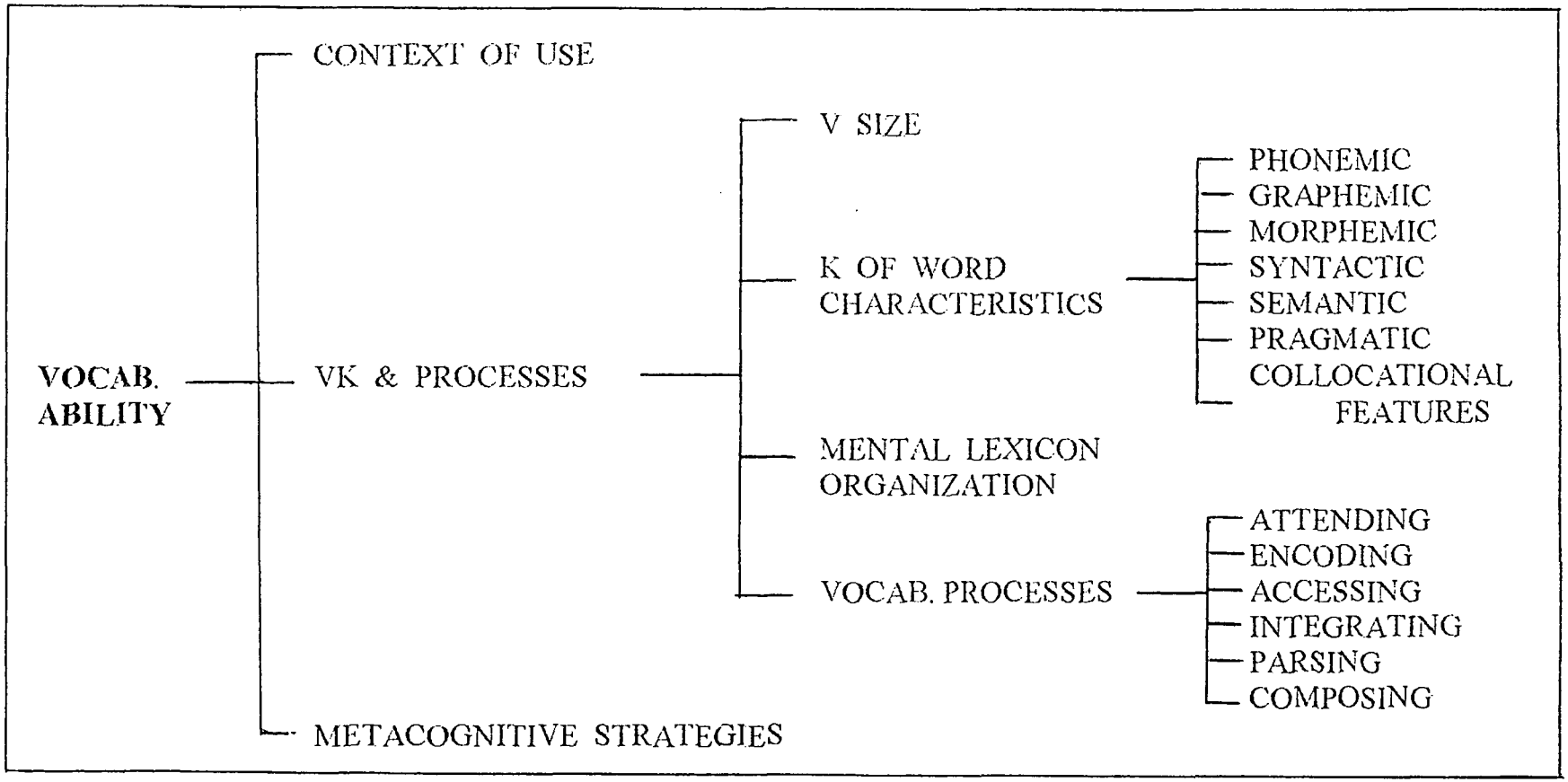

Figure 2. Components of **vocabulary ability** as outlined by Chapelle (1994: 164 - 7)

consider this location: an auditorium with a runway on which mannequins display newly created models of garment for young women; what is being done: the selling of clothes; the topic: particular features of items of clothing, the material they are made of, the possible uses they allow, their capability to evoke exotic or past familiar (or even imaginary worlds') 'cultural traits', etc.; a middle-aged lady who hosts selected professionals and personalities related to the fashion trade who are addressed by her in such a manner that they neither feel on a higher role relationship, nor on a lower one; the host needs to sell pieces of a collection, but later on the guests will try to secure the exclusiveness to their market area; language is used to seduce and persuade in coherently threaded spoken descriptions and reports, or even stories, songs, poems, etc. Now compare the above situation with the biology classroom one. Presumably many of the context specifications will be even more institutionalized and possibly, though not necessarily, more formal, and topics will differ to a large extent, etc. Or still, take the reading of the newspaper in which case the changed channel not only brings about a different language, but also requires a different reception skill. All these variables are assumed to have a bearing on the ability to put vocabulary to use (cf. Halliday & Hasan 1985).

Interesting enough and as Ringbom (1987) had already indicated, Chapelle (1994) does not isolate K and process. Besides assigning component status to context in her picture of VocAbil., her next component, **Vocabulary knowledge and fundamental processes**, is a very inclusive concept, as it can be seen on Figure 2, consisting of four 'dimensions'. **Vocabulary size**, the first one, in her adopted interactionalist definition, refers specifically to the number of content words known to the learner in a given context of language use in particular.[28] Although some researchers, like Nation (1993), she points, consider learners' vocabulary in absolute terms, she argues that it is to be considered (defined, assessed, and presumably taught too) by taking into account contextual variation in the use of words.[29]

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[28] Therefore a considerable part of Robinson's 'procedural V' is excluded here. It should be noticed, however, that Robinson's 'procedural V' is in fact a means to an end, which is VA, but not an end in itself, however undeniable its communicative value might be.

[29] Possibly one thing that will strike most whomever approaches V Size, no matter how minimally, is the extent to which authors disagree in many respects and how their estimates differ. In fact, this is another very controversial issue. To begin with because of considerable variation exists as to what to count as a word. Not only that, though. Other different methodological decisions may lead to quite contrasting results. The design of the testing instrument (what items are selected, where they are selected from --the 'big dictionary' effect, etc.), how it is to be applied, what sort of response is considered indicative of the possession of relevant K (to relate the target word to given synonyms or antonyms, to give a definition of the item, or to fit it into a meaningful sentence, etc.), what procedures of calculation are followed to reach usefull estimates, etc., all have a bearing at the end. Chapelle (1994) refers to Aitchison (1987) to remind us that there is no absolute estimate of native-speakers' V size to compare learners' ones with.

The next dimension in this broad component, **Knowledge of word characteristics**, encompasses the 'phonemic, graphemic, morphemic, syntactic, semantic, pragmatic and collocational features', therefore besides including graphemic and highlighting pragmatic features it covers almost the whole of Richards' notion and the most part of that of Ringbom. As in the latter, K of particular words is not taken on an all-or-none basis, rather it varies over time, that is, during the gradual process of VA, along each of those 'features' (or '*dimensions*' in Ringbom's terminology). Thus, Chapelle (1994) says, K in progress of any given lexical item may be, as pointed out by Bialystok & Sharwood Smith (1985), incorrect (erroneous lexical representation that does not correspond to the TL item), incomplete (lack of K of some important part of the word that may lead the learner to mistake it for a different word that shares some formal similarities [30]), or unanalysed (stored chunks of ordinary language that are initially internalized as if units very closely associated to specific contexts and functions whose components are not perceived as such --or are mistakenly abstracted--, therefore they do not enable correct creative language use [31]).

But in Aitchison we may find numbers as well. After reviewing some milestone literature, she sticks to these estimates: adult humans (educated native speakers) are likely to know no less than 50,000 and possibly as many as 250,000 items in the overall account --base words, rare base words, derivatives and compounds-- (1987: 7). Cf. Footnote 8 below in this chapter.

[30] Incidentally, lexical confusions is a particular area of lexical errors that has been gaining salience lately in applied linguistics thanks to a large extent to the work of Laufer on 'synforms' or similar lexical forms ('synophones', 'synographs', etc.): addition/addiction, merely/merrily, price/prize, extend/extent, quite/quiet, imaginary/imaginative/imaginable, etc. (Laufer 1991). In another study of hers, a little bit differently from Chapelle's (1994) statement, lexical confusions are attributed to 'defective (wrong or incomplete) representation of one or both confused items' forms.' (Laufer 1990: 282). Moreover, in this study, Laufer found out that both native speakers and foreign learners of English follow 'a similar sequence, an overall developmental route' (290) and that the most difficult distinctions are those related to suffix synforms: economic/economical, credible/credulous, etc. Presumably, besides these apparently solely intralingual errors, others stemming more clearly from L1 interference, such as Brazilian learners' pull/push (*puxar) which like price/prize also differ only in their final consonantal phonemes, might fall into a broadened category of lexical confusions also due to similarity in the formal characteristics of the words. Still in the 1991 study, Laufer points out that no matter the theory for the confusions of learners --either the entries are 'faint' and not accessible, or they are retrieved intact though wrongly represented in storage-- some features of the words are more salient to their apprehension ('grammatical category, stress pattern, initial elements and consonants' (328)) and consequently better represented and accessed while others tend to be more difficult to master: 'non-initial parts of the items (...); number of syllables and vowels' (328). Still in connection with these later points, we may refer to the so-called 'bathtub effect' in adult NS's lexical retrieval and speech errors (cf. Aitchison 1987: 119-21).

[31] In a study of the 'learner's task' in SLA (mostly considered in 'naturalistic' terms, that is, as non-guided learning or non-formal learning), Klein (1986) explores among other things the 'analysis' of basic 'structural properties of the input' which follows, in what VA is concerned, the perceptual salience of some (suprasegmental) features in utterances: frequently occurring syllables and syllable combinations, some of which may gain lexical status earlier than others (function words, for instance, which are more

Lexicon organization is a third dimension in the K-and-processes component. It names the manner by which the entries (morphemes and words) are represented in the subjective lexicon, their mutual connections. Chapelle reminds us that the theoretical debate has not yet been settled and more conclusive propositions are still lacking here. Nevertheless, researchers are most appealed to the hypothesis that the mutual connections among the entries are principally semantic in nature [32]. This seems to be even more so as more advanced proficiency is taken into account. In earlier proficiency stages, however, strong links based on the phonological features of the words appear to hold them together (cf. the evidence brought about by 'clang associates' in the studies of word association tests with bilinguals and learners reviewed by Meara (1980), as well as my supposition as to why this is so; please refer back to Section 2.2.1 in Ch. 2 above). While development of learners' K is advancing, their lexicon organization undergoes 'restructuring'.[33] Driving to a concluding statement in which the important part of context is reaffirmed, she notes that some researchers claim the lexicon in fact never rests on a fixed configuration and that the connections between the words are fluid and ever open to the impact of variables arising from the context.[34]

Chapelle's **Fundamental vocabulary processes** [35] is the fourth dimension in this major component. Here she is particularly interested in those processes that are called for in accessing lexical K already existing in the mind. She identifies six such processes: attending to relevant features in the input; encoding in short-term memory information relative to the phonological or orthographic form of the word; accessing from the lexicon in long-term

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difficult to 'match' with non-linguistic information available in and derived from the situation or supplemented from world K); pause-adjacent parts (openings and closings of utterances); prosodic features, particularly stressed parts which more often than not coincide with content words rather than function ones; and, parts that bear best candidacy, in accordance with general K of language and communication as well as world K, to correspond to gestures of participants, things and events, etc., on a here-and-now frame (66-71).

[32] Palmberg (1993) also refers to this state of affairs.

[33] This labels a concept borrowed from McLaughlin (1990), which, however, has also a very similar counterpart available in Ausubel et al. (1978) by the name 'assimilation'; cf. 'consolidation' in the scheme above in Section 2.2.2.

[34] It could be noticed here that the work of scientists, philosophers, and others, primarily embodied in written language, seems to require the imposing of fixed connections between some words selected to represent the basic concepts of theirs and to represent the stable relationships the concepts hold among themselves (in spite of Bergson's --the French philosopher-- complaints about the incommensurable mismatch of language and intuiton, and thought and being --'le mouvant'). On the other hand, however, Chapelle's note might fit in Cruse's (1986) 'contextual approach to lexical meaning' and generalize Robinson's (1989a, 1989b) 'dynamic view' of the lexicon.

[35] In spite of her overt systematic concern with the design of a quite complete notion of 'V ability', here she still seems to be dealing solely with aspects related to word recognition.

memory structural and semantic K; integrating the meaning of the identified incoming word to the gist of the recent input being accumulated; parsing the morphological structure of the word; and, composing words out of the pool of analysed morphemes. Such processes, she explains, are inherently related to those characteristics of lexical K and memory organization already seen. Thus, for instance, she adds, access time is a function among other things of the way lexical K is represented in the lexicon organization. Of course, the features of the context in which these processes are taking place have to be kept in mind, she insists (if her definition of processes in VU had included production aspects as well, then it would have been the case of relating the discussion to the issue of the impact of her **context** in constraining item choices and affecting language users' decisions in real time use of language, etc.).

The last component in Chapelle's 'vocabulary ability' is named **Metacognitive strategies for vocabulary use**. According to her definition, borrowed from Bachman's (1990) 'strategic competence' for language use, these strategies are necessary to account for native speakers' use of V when they are assessing the situation, setting communication goals, designing plans for language use [36], and controlling the execution of such plans. However, she emphasizes that the ability of controlling lexical K and processes driven by the individuals' motivations in accordance to determinants stemming from characteristics of the context is also a fundamental asset learners get by with during their incipient VK stages and insures them conditions to proceed developing competence and communication ability. In this connection she mentions a number of compensatory 'strategic plans' that Blum-Kulka & Levenston (1983: 126) pointed out in typical learners' behavior: 'circumlocution, paraphrase, language switch, appeal to authority, change of topic and semantic avoidance' (Chapelle 1994: 167).[37] Concluding this point, she argues that, as ability progresses and V size enlarges, these 'plans' are left behind. On the other hand, metacognitive strategies remain operative as an integral part of any lexical performance. Notwithstanding this, native speakers performing language communication in very familiar situations in particular may dispense with attentional control to 'accomplish both the basic cognitive processes and metacognitive strategies automatically' (167).

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[36] In this respect, it might be interesting to refer back (Section 1.1 on pp. 16 and 25-6) to the issue of Levelt's (1978) plans in language performance.

[37] The first two of these might appear to be similar, but while paraphrase is neutral, circumlocution -- wordy expression-- clearly involves a certain violation of ordinary elegance ('acceptability', 'naturalness', or any other hyponym) and suggests that a very well-fitting and tip-of-the-tongue item was unfortunately ignored. More clearly than these, the last two ones are indeed lexical instances of the classical avoidance strategy. Interesting enough, here it seems that her concept becomes more permeable to production issues.

It is worth noting that in Chapelle's concept there is room for a concern with acquisition too. Since VA is a never ending process, consequently it is ever likely that there will be an unexpected occurrence of an unknown item in any experience in which LexProf plays a part. But she has also explicitly opened a room for acquisitional elements in her view of the mental lexical entries as evolving entities and the provisional 'strategic plans'. Thus Chapelle integrates in her comprehensive concept the interfaces of VK, VU, and VA.

Still in connection with all this chapter preceding matter, some authors (Rapakko 1993; Nattinger 1988; among others) propose that K of **fixed expressions**,[38] lexical phrases, or 'multi-word lexical items', also should be considered an integral part of LexC and LexProf. They argue that lack of such K would lead the learners to indulge themselves in forced 'creativity' and undue language analysis, therefore pushing them beyond the 'degree of acceptability' (cf. Leech 1974b: 210ff) which results in the unidiomaticity of their language (cf. Sinclair's (1989) notion of 'naturalness'). Conversely, Nattinger (1988) also points to positive consequences this kind of K may bring to learners: it provides raw material for linguistic analysis, helps fluency in production and allows preventing the violation of certain lexical restrictions and appropriate register (77).

In a similar vein, others (cf. Ilson 1983; Corson 1983) suggest that etymological K -- information about the origins or history of a word or any particular sense of a word or phrase --could also receive status of a dimension, or a feature for that matter (if we stick to Chapelle's labels), in the idea of LexC and LexProf [39]. If we remember Chapelle's emphasis on the importance of context, which is a component of her VocAbil construct in its own right, we then may agree with Ilson, at least as far as the topic areas of medical studies, biology, and many other sciences of the natural world are concerned, that for instance the K of Greek and Latin loan morphemes[40] is a crucial asset for VA, VK and VU. Somehow in support to this position it could be claimed that etymological K is already subsumed in LexC, even though it might have been disguised as morphological K.

The assignment of feature status to etymology within a concept of LexProf for various reasons seems very appealing, though, particularly if we bear in mind the inherent acquisitional aspect of LexProf. Ilson (1983), in spite of a somehow 'hedged' title for his

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[38] Or FE as they are often referred to after a typical preference of applied linguists for acronyms like this.

[39] Corson (1983) suggests that words from Greco-Latin origins might be very troublesome to NS of English whose mastery, at best, is only a late acquisition of theirs.

[40] Many of which are still very alive and productive in diverse areas of technological changes as well, and this holds true at least for the most prominent European languages: 'telegram', 'telegraph', 'telephone', 'telescope', 'microscope', 'phonogram', 'phonograph', 'photograph', 'photogram', or mixed such as 'television', 'pictograph', 'pictogram', and then the sort of 'crioulo breeds', so to speak, such as 'photo-essay', 'teleprompter', 'teleprinter', 'teletypewriter', and mostly those like the verb 'televise'!

paper, certainly believes that etymological K indeed is useful in learner's undertakings, that is, it may contribute to improve acquisition, at least as motivation goes, because genuine interest from the part of audiences often arises out of this kind of information. Moreover, those who adopt the 'levels of processing' view of VA would gain a rich supporting contribution for the implementation of firm and well integrated entries, as well as their strong and organized linkage. Etymological information helps establishing very meaningful relations between words, even though some pieces of it seemingly may be borderline cases on the edge of encyclopedic K.[41] Additionally, those concerned with strategic dimensions, both in learning and in communicating, would not deny the potential value of knowing, for instance,

G = πυρ (pûr/pyr: 'fire') → L = pyra [42]

in helping to assimilate a considerable group of English words (or morphemes):
→ pyr- / pyro- (combining form); → pyre (funeral pyre); → pyretic (relating to fever);
→ pyrex (a trademark); → pyrography (art process); → pyromania (a mania);
→ pyrotechnics (relating to fireworks, etc.) [43]; etc.

Not only K of Greek, or Latin words, though. Also that of words of German (Übermensch → superman; etc.), or French (travail → travail; etc.), or other languages,

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[41] Consider 'Koranic' and the corresponding entry in the 'COBUILD Dictionary' (whose design is aimed at helping learners, therefore more room for basic linguistic information has precedence over complementing encyclopedic K references; as these lay beyond the strictly and more abstracted 'neutral' semantic definitions, they are not abundant and seemingly inscribed and detectable mostly as proper nouns in capital letters, apart a number of acronyms: Labour Party, Olympic Games, Diwali, Gulf Stream, Exchequer, ELT, ESL, ESP, GCSE, etc.): 'is used to describe something which belongs or relates to the Koran.' (p. 803). Now take this head sentence from a paragraph by Robinson: 'Learning predisposition is, in a sense, Koranic (...)' (1989a: 277). If the learner looks up the dictionary entry above little will he/she learn about the 'predisposition' referred to in the passage, unless by a lucky chance, for some reason or another, he/she knows that schools in most Islamic countries base their pedagogical procedures on the model of male religious education which is mostly centered on the verbatim recitation of a Holy Book (cf. 'Educación coránica' in Gardner 1987: 376ff in which we are also taught the etymology of 'Koran' → to read, recite). Interesting enough, this precise kind of information, which accounts for the origin of such specific sense of 'Koranic', is also a typical instance of encyclopedic K! Possibly suspecting this could be missing in the readers' repertoire, Robinson himself 'translates' the word, asserts its specific meaning, that is, by resorting not to his proposed 'procedural vocabulary', but mainly to encyclopedic information in reporting his experience in the University of Bahrain: 'Learning predisposition is, in a sense, Koranic, with the emphasis on rote memorization. Vocabulary lends itself, from one perspective, quite readily to this declarative view of what it is to know and learn. Therefore, to provide a sense of continuity with their school education and cultural orientation, I provided students with various exercises which test vocabulary learnt in this way.' (1989a: 277).

[42] Cf. Partridge (1983).

[43] Cf. *Macmillan Contemporary Dictionary.*

might help to detect and understand possible 'kinship relations' with many unknown English words. Though Portuguese has possibly contributed fewer words to the English lexicon than it has incorporated English words into its own one, there are not only instances of the former group (garoupa → grouper; crioulo → creole; caju → cashew; tucano → toucan; tapir → tapir; varanda → veranda [44]; and several others transferred directly), but also there is a large group of words which share a common birth in both languages, that is, 'cognate' words: formula / 'fórmula', formulary / 'formulário'; lexical / 'lexical'; etc. However, what is at issue is not only kinship relations of form, but also, in the context of L1-L2 similarities and contrasts, the relations of meaning. Therefore, on the one hand, this type of etymological information may be helpful in raising and checking lexical hypotheses, both in communicating and learning, but on the other hand it may mislead too. So, in a sense, it may help save time, but then it also requires time: take 'eventual' (Port.) [45], for instance, and *eventual* which share ancestry, but have evolved to quite different usual meanings - fortuitous vs. ultimate, inevitable. A fact that might cause faulty assimilation owing to L1 interference (and lack of etymological K too!) and subsequently call for unlearning.

Ilson (1983) in fact proposes to consider etymological information not restricted to the derivation from the primeval origins of words and cognates only, because knowing about how 'a word, phrase, or sense came to be as it is' (77) has a bearing on knowing how to apply morphological competence: *'inflammable*, as [inflame + -able, not *in- + flammable]' (77), thus preventing or overriding eventual semantic confusions such as *'not flammable', which in fact is the meaning of another morphological deed: *nonflammable.*[46]

Even more interesting though, Ilson's (1983) 'why' category of etymologies (after the Merriam-Webster lexicographers' naming) constitutes a kind of 'knowing' that allows more competent use of metaphor and idioms 'whose relation as wholes to the sum of their parts is (almost by definition!) opaque.' (79). Understanding the meaning of such 'wholes' often requires 'historical explanations', that is, their etymology, often rendered as encyclopedic K.

In this connection, Ilson (1983) brings in *halcyon days*, an instance taken from the *Longman Dictionary of English Idioms*, in which it is presented like this:

> Referring to the ancient belief that the KINGFISHER (a water bird whose Greek name is halcyon) laid its eggs on the sea during a 14-day period of calm and good weather [47]

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[44] Cf. *Macmillan Contemporary Dictionary.*

[45] Cf. *Novo Dicionário da Lingua Portuguesa*

[46] Coincidentally, these are cognates of the Portuguese 'inflamável', 'inflam[a] + -ável'.

[47] As it was already mentioned, the COBUILD being typically a learners' monolingual dictionary, as Ilson's (1983) explains, does not emphazise such kind of K in a trade-off of room for other type of

Here the proposals of both the FE authors and those of the etymologies get clearly intermingled.[48]

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information presumed of more immediate utility for learners (principally a greater number of different entries or senses). Accordingly, we can not find an entry for the above idiom, but there is one for the **word** *halcyon*:

> A **halcyon** time is a peaceful or happy one, especially one that you remember later in your life; a formal word. EG *...the halcyon days of his late teens.*

In addition to such diversified, though strait-to-the-point and pedagogic kinds of information, in which we can notice that the illustrating sentence displays a sort of 'hyponymic' collocational use (of a classifying adjective that goes in attributive position bofore a noun, the accompanying 'grammar notes' also make clear), nothing else is given. Neither encyclopedic K, nor any bit of FE or etymological information. Whereas the Macmillan, being basically a monolingual dictionary for native speakers, accordingly bears an entry of **hal.cy.on** somewhat different in that it aggregates in the noun description, besides basic linguistic meaning, all sorts of K, but the usual collocation:

> *adj.* undisturbed; peaceful; happy: *to yearn for the halcyon days of that springtime long ago.*
>
> *--n.* kingfisher, the bird with the legendary power of calming the sea at the winter solstice to protect its floating nest during the period of incubation. [Latin *halcyon* kingfisher, from Greek *(h)alkyon.*]

These exemplars also serve to typically illustrate the various decisions/options lexicographers have to make which, following their particular views of LexProf, are intended to foster their targeted audience's competence.

[48] A similar remark applies to those who believe that since encyclopedic K and world K (frames, scripts, etc.) are an integral part of the language user's or language learner's conceptual structure and as such have an inherent interface with VK, they should, therefore, find a room of their own in LexProf (e.g. Ausubel *et al.* 1978).

In this connection, it is worth also mentioning typicality experiments with natural category objects, as well as (most of the time sociolinguist) Labov's somehow similar work with semantic memory and the conceptualization of artifacts (people's naming-shifts of cups to bowls, etc.), besides old psychological experiments [words as 'doors of perception', so to speak] in which people watching to the same schematic drawing are induced to either perceive in it a pair of glasses or a dumbbell depending on which word was previously activated as if by chance in the subject's memory. A case in point is psycholinguist Rosch's series of very famous studies of English native speakers' categorization, particularly that of BIRD, in which it was found out that it is a robin that people more often than not think of as the best exemplar that typifies the category, as opposed to ostrich, penguin, etc. Very possibly, whales, in spite of nowadays growing common-sense concern with them in Brazil, seldom will be remembered as a tip-of-the-tongue appropriate response to questions such as 'what is the largest animal?', or 'what is the largest mammal?'. The issue here is the extent to which the mental lexicon, the psycholinguistic metaphor of VK, interrelates in an individual's mind with all those other metaphors and types of K --the organization of the conceptual structure, the mental encyclopedia, and the stores of world K. To add a little more difficulty, it could be noticed that usually it is not easy to tell apart what is the basic definition of the word linguistic meaning from what is encyclopedic K. To illustrate this point, let me refer to the COBUILD dictionary again and take, among several others, the entry **kibbutz** (in lowercase letter this time):

> A **kibbutz** is a farm, factory, or other workplace in Israel, where the workers live together and share all the duties and income. EG *He wrote to the Jewish agency asking to visit a kibbutz.* [it continues on the next page]

'Why' etymologies, Ilson (1983) adds, may also account for the origin of just a particular sense of a word.

Now, if the different kinds of etymology are combined, and many senses, words or phrases may indeed allow, or require, such possibility, an even more increased acquisitional (motivational, organizational, etc.), or language-use-processual [49], effect may be brought about.

Of course, the acquisition of etymological K, Ilson concedes, has its fare in terms of learning time. In addition to that, I believe a certain metalinguistic stance and a good deal of word K from the part of the language user/learner possibly are a prerequisite. However, the usefulness of such kind of K seems undeniable.

I have begun this chapter by considering the issue of LexC, but then a new label, LexProf, somehow forced its way into the discussion. I think the terminology proposed in the introduction to the chapter is clear in addition to be founded in pertinent literature. Compared to LingC, which is mainly the child of top mainstream theoretical linguists, LexC is somehow a 'bastard' concept. It has been put forward not directly by linguists, who somehow are more freed from practical demands and therefore may attempt higher levels of conceptual exactness, but by applied linguists, who presumably have based themselves among other things on the work and ideas of linguists in relation to vocabulary. As far as the interest span of applied linguists is wider and more variable, it seems to me that the more comprehensive the term, the better it is. Hence the design and title of this section. LexProf is the all-inclusive concept and label: competence, performance, ability.

Moreover, if we include the notion of developing ability under the term LexProf, then there will be no harm in labelling as such what we have been discussing so far. Therefore, Lex. Prof. has many dimensions: not just in terms of K of word characteristics (Richards, Nattinger, Ilson) plus accessibility (Ringbom), but also of 'storekeeping' (Robinson's ability to use K) and 'strategic competence' (Chapelle).

What does this need to otherwise be fully termed an instance of encyclopedic K in its own right? Some 'historical' data to couple with these basic 'geographical' information? How did the kibbutzim come into being, etc.?

[49] At least as there are more alternative information routes interconnected with the targeted sense, word, or phrase which may help the retrieving process.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

This thesis embodies an exploratory work that sprang from a concern with lack of vocabulary knowledge and aimed at finding major ways and means to face such a problem that unfortunately happens to be connected with various areas in which disagreement and uncertainty prevail. It is somehow structured in the form of modules which taken together, so it is hoped, serve as a useful stepping stone to an incursion into the 'heart of darkness'.

I began by a survey of the works issued in my immediate cultural environment: what has been done in matters of vocabulary in the context of FLL. Many works have dealt with vocabulary issues rather indirectly. Others only partially or secondarily touched lexical matters. Some stemming from concerns with students' errors are focused on specific topics regarding the grammatical usage of specific categories of words.

None has concentrated explicitly on the theme of Vocabulary Knowledge and the means and ways to acquire it, which somehow parallels the state of affairs in the international panorama according to what was insistently denounced in the literature: those matters had not received the necessary concern they deserved, mostly if we acknowledge LexProf as a crucial asset in different domains related to FL/L2 use and acquisition as the literature in diverse areas also attests.

For these reasons, in Chapter 2, I lay siege to the 'neglected area' to see what comes out of it: the denunciation of the state of neglect pointed out in the literature in the last decades insistently converges to the assignment of causal responsibility to linguists. In tracing back the origins of the problem, I found that theory building about language and vocabulary seems to still be a 'work in progress'. A situation in which vocabulary either plays the role of "Cinderella", or that of "Prima Donna".

While searching for the international literature works more closely related with issues in connection with VA research in AL, I came across a paper by Meara (1980) in which I learned an interesting insightful cleavage of matters that clarified my understanding

of the 'field' of VA for appplied linguistics works. Simultaneously to this I also learned to identify the most 'neglected area' in vocabulary studies: how the learners' mental structure of lexical knowledge evolves and gets organized along the process of FL/L2 VA. This allowed me to spot an even darker corner under the blanket 'learning process': the cognitive psychological process itself.[1]

I then headed for the building of a scheme, somewhat implicit in Meara's (1980) review of the 'field', as a preliminary map to allow an overview of areas of interest in connection with vocabulary in FLL/SLA, thus culminating this horizontal outlook.

Chapter 3, another stepping stone, is related to the K issue, but basically within a linguistic perspective: applied linguistic analyses of LexProf. Some basic points in relation to VK that might help clarify the process of VA in an FL/L2. It is the 'what' in the VA process.

So this is a work whose aim is at the clearing of ways towards probably more candent issues in the 'field' of VA: how do we get LexC, VocAbil, LexProf? Therefore, to move on to, or move about, questions like the following:

> What is the role of practice in VA? Is it a major factor? Does practice affect differently the building of word knowledge and the ability to use that knowledge?
>
> What kind of practice leads to what kind of acquisition and what amount of practice has that effect?
>
> Is VA a punctual process or an incremental one?
>
> What aspects of LexProf constitute the brass tacks of VA?
>
> Does VA differ to any significant degree from language acquisition in general? Does VK involve something else apart from linguistic knowledge? Does VA fit well into the models of language acquisition? Does FL/L2 VA fit well into the models of FL/L2 language acquisition? Conversely, do models of FL/L2 acquisition have any explicit concern with VA?
>
> Does VA directly depend (if so, to what extent?) on any conscious process? Does awareness of the components and dimensions of LexProf affect VA? Either directly, that is, in the process proper, or indirectly by allowing better control and strategic organization of the conditions that may favor that process?
>
> Is it the case that some aspects of LexProf depend on conscious operations in their acquisition?
>
> Is it the case that at least some (or at most, many) aspects of LexProf are learned in the same way as that depicted by models of learning in general, that is,

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[1] The scarce information I have about neurolinguistic underpinnings to this, and what physiological changes accompany psychological states and processes related to VK, VU, and VA, seem to suggest that the 'neglected area' might be even more extended.

by involving, instead of a specific device for language acquisition (the language 'organ'), just ordinary problem-solving abilities?

What is the degree of 'immunity' to attrition or loss that well acquired and consolidated VK has? How does it compare with the other aspects of language knowledge? Is there any aspect of VK that is relatively more prone to loss?

What aspects of VK are easier to learn? Does an answer to this hold valid to any word? What sort of 'intralexical factors' might cause difficulty to learners? Can we talk about 'stages' in VA? If so, what are they? [stages in the development of L2 LexProf] When are the abilities to disassemble and assemble FL/L2 words acquired? What is the relative frequency of occurrence of learners' lexical errors stemming from problems with lexical collocation? valency? word stress? Are there characteristic lexical errors that typify learning stages? What are the characteristics of the vocabulary of learners of beginning competence, and how does it compare with that of those in more advanced levels of competence? Are there any typical kinds of behavior in relation to the use and the acquisition of words associated with beginners, intermediate learners, or advanced ones, respectively?

What are the relationships between ID (learners'/bilinguals' types/ classes/ categories) and the various aspects of VK and VA?

What are the methods of discovering learners'/bilinguals' types?

What are the methods for portraying learners'/bilinguals' characteristic behavior at any specific stage of competence?

What are the methods for determining /detecting the characteristics of the vocabulary of learners' of various competence levels?

Why such a concern with VA? Because of the crucial importance of VK in performance of language in communication and the many difficulties involved in learning vocabulary, particularly for productive purposes. Vocabulary items that might be easily understood do not necessarily lend themselves to acquisition (cf. Marton 1977; Mondria and colleague 1991, 1993). This is but just one of the many deceptive features of vocabulary dealings.

The psychological perspective which also has to deal with the K question, but this time the cognitive aspects of it --architecture of the mind, memory design, semantic memory, mental representations, concepts and propositions, schemata, images, declarative K and procedural K, skill, etc.-- as an embedding ground for the metaphors of the mental encyclopedia and the psycholinguistic mental lexicon, would be a possible next 'logical territory' in this long days' journey into the field. Here the various aspects of K and ability referred to as components of LexProf would not be seen as the objective characteristics of the K that learners have to internalize, but as how these components might reside in the learners'/bilinguals' mind: the nature of the representation of all those different aspects of K

in their mental lexical entries; the interrelationships of the entries in the organization of the mental lexicon; etc.

This VK territory (an isthmus or what?) is to be a passage way to The Dark Continent: VA --the terminal (initial?!) 'logical goal' (base?) that may finally allow more immediate pedagogical derivations. How those various kinds of K and ability come into being. The study of knowledge-building and skill-getting as a platform for the launching of newly-oriented management-of-learning projects.

VA is a process that occurs over time. In two different senses: on the one hand, because there are too many items to know (the 'size of the task' point), which confers to VA the quality of a lifelong undertaking --we are constantly learning new words or new senses of words, and on the other, because each item in itself involves many dimensions or features of K to be mastered cumulatively. The greater the number of features known in a lexical entry, the better integrated is the mental structure of it, the more consolidated is its elaboration, and the easier is its retrieval as well (cf. pp. 101 ff. above).[2]

It seems to be clear that vocabulary is a crucial problem in many fields of the studies of language --Linguistics, Psycholinguistics, AL, etc.: lexis as the main problem in grammar theorizing in the UG tradition; VA as a 'neglected area' in FLL/SLA research; various models of the mental lexicon and the lexical processing system ('Cohort', 'Logogen', Forster's, 'Cascade', 'TRACE', etc.); etc. On the other hand, very clearly too, many authors who deal with FLL have tackled issues related to VA in one way or another, but what should be remarked is that they seldom attempt to develop any integrated view of the knowledge already available. Maybe this is a consequence of the very nature of vocabulary studies which, in addition to their inherent nature of piecemeal work, they also lie on the heart of a many-science crossroad. Since many of those sciences seem mostly to be still living their controversy days, odds are that we may still need to wait some time longer until major changes be noticeable in the landscape. Let us consider, for instance, a work (Nation 1990) made by an author who has been producing applied linguistic studies of vocabulary since the mid seventies and in this one has drawn from a 900-title bibliography that spans over the last 100 years --very possibly the largest collection in the area. Notwithstanding the wide range of topics evidenced in this book, Nation's views are very much bound to immediate concerns of practitioners involved with daily dealings with vocabulary

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[2] However, the relation between well-integrated and eleborated knowledge does not necessarily translate into automatization and fluency which are the aspects of LexProf that undergo the interference of performance-affecting factors such as distraction, stress, distress, fatigue, hypnosis, etc.

acquisition. Most applied linguists would certainly praise this feature quite heartily. However, some applied linguists would also argue against it. Kelly (1990) denies that a kind of risky business, guessing, involving that set of strategies so cherished by Nation, leads to acquisition. In a similar vein, Mondria & Wit-De Boer (1991) and Mondria (1993) have shown experimentally that little retention remains after successful guessing occurs. Somehow in line with this, Marton (1977) stresses that easily comprehended new vocabulary hardly leads to acquisition, particularly its features of collocation, thus antecipating the debate on remembering vs. inferring championed by Pressley & Levin and Atkinson & Raugh and Cohen vs. Sternberg. Curiously enough, the former four authors are not in the 900 list. What is meant to say by this is that it is certainly crucial for practitioners to find guidance in facing their urgent problems, but this might also prevent the 'patience of the concept' from coming into being.

Much more beyond this horizon, or perhaps much beneath this territory, it seems to me that another 'neglected area', possibly even more fundamental than any of those mentioned above, is one whose name might sound pompous, but very possibly may become step number one for jobs in areas related to lexical or language proficiency and its/their acquisition: an epystemology of language sciences, or perhaps more narrowly, epystemology of linguistics and of learning theories. Some incipient moves towards that direction, but presumably unfortunately not seminal yet, we can find in McLaughlin's (1987), Garnham's (1985), and Larsen-Freeman & Long's (1991), and possibly a few (or many?) others' discussion of issues in connection with the theories in SLA and Psycholinguistics.

To my knowledge there is no such a thing as Epystemology of Language Sciences, nor even an Epystemology of Linguistic Sciences, in any university organization in the world. Should we search for it in Language Institutes, or Philosophy Institutes, or still Social or Behavioral Sciences, Human Sciences, or what?

I hope this dissertation may help 'fix' some instrumental vocabulary to clear a way towards a fully developed terminology, as well as help bring about some increment in the familiarity with some authors and topics I believe are important in leading us into which is most likely an obscure area of FLL/SLA matters.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1

A copy of the **original project** of research and dissertation is presented here.

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UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DE SANTA CATARINA
POS-GRADUAÇÃO EM LETRAS

THESIS PROJECT:

FOREIGN LANGUAGE VOCABULARY ACQUISITION AND LANGUAGE TEACHING MATERIALS
[ACQUISITION OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE VOCABULARY AND INPUT]

ANTONIO EDUARDO VIEIRA DE ALMEIDA

NOVEMBER 1990

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INTRODUCTION

People [very] often attribute their difficulties in communication to vocabulary problems. Particularly foreign language learners blame their linguistic troubles on the lack of vocabulary knowledge. Maybe not all these [the] problems are well diagnosed. [Instead of vocabulary, other factors] Possibly other factors besides vocabulary might be responsible for the complaints. Nevertheless, it is commonsense that words are crucial in communicative performance. This can easily be attested by a simple browsing of thesis dissertations, research reports, or a more attentive consideration of teachers' implicit or explicit testimonies on the matter.

Foreign language learners engage themselves in a great variety of language tasks along their educational experience. After a number of years, some become quite competent. Others [,however,] not so much. Appart from individual differences of aptitude, motivation, learning behavior, etc., many external factors and conditions may be singled out as [contributing] contributors to such variability. Among them are [the] materials designed for language courses. Materials are part of systems whose breadth might even involve a number of people in different areas, including the very central government of a nation and its decisions concerning allowances to the presumed educational needs of [many] entire communities. On the other hand, materials may be regarded as totalities [in themselves] provided with intrinsic characteristics which consequently lend themselves to analysis. In addition, materials may also carry explicitly stated beliefs or inbuilt assumptions related eitheir minimally to the mere presentation of new words in each unit or [,] more decidedly[,] to a deliberate concern with lexical instruction as such.

No matter whether neglectful or [concerned] dedicated, both types of materials can profitably be approached by an association of insights stemming from three disciplines[:], psycholinguistics, cognitive psychology, and applied linguistics. Thus the goal of my dissertation is to investigate to what extent language learning materials, with especial emphasis on those commonly used in the [UFSC] UFSC's environment and/or presented by publishers as particularly relevant in vocabulary studies, are 1) concerned with lexical competence; 2) aware of relevant psycholinguistic proposals concerning the mental lexicon; 3) in accordance with related studies of the human memory; and 4) consistent with suggestions arising from applied linguistic research such as learning theories and language teaching approaches.

The assumption to guide the investigation is the belief that a treatment of the above mentioned issues, regardless of its inevitably incipient nature, will end-up proving as beneficial not only to the improvement of my own lexical development strategies, but also to other people's efforts towards vocabulary learning/instruction.

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REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Here are presented some of the relevant issues associated with the topic of the investigation project. They are fundamentally taken from Aitchison, 1987; Ringbom, 1987; Carter & McCarthy, 1988; Cohen, Eysenck & Le Voi, 1986; and, Gairns & Redman, 1986.

Psycholinguistics has produced a significant amount of research (speech errors in performance, difficulties of aphasic patients, etc.) which eventually provided the grounds for the construction of tentative models of the organization of the mental representations of words together with a picture of the process whereby words get stored (learnt) and used: the mental lexicon. Coupling with these, there are parallel studies in cognitive psychology attempting to clarify the human memory mechanisms which account for the ways any given item of information, say a word or a chunk of words, is committed to memory and afterwards is successfully retrieved from it, or otherwise can only be partially or intermitently recovered, or still, at the worst, is doomed to undergo total [oblivion] decay.

There are two important points to be considered in regard to the psycholinguistic and cognitive psychological contributions. The ways the words get in and the ways they get out of the mind. The first point [splits] opens itself into two directions. One is related to the ways words fall into arrangements of a phonological and/or semantic nature within the mental lexicon store. The other has to do with the mechanisms [strategies] of memory, such as repetition, rehearsal, association with what is already known, context cueing, depth of processing, etc., which take part in the storage of any item to be committed to memory. These two descriptions concerning the storage of words may help to understand the learning process which may eventually yield actual vocabulary acquisition, that is, the capacity to actively use the words rather than [the mere] an ability to recognise them or to understand them in particular contexts.

The other one of the two points alluded to in the above paragraph refers to the reverse process, that is, how words stored in the mental lexicon get out of it in productive uses of vocabulary. Again two sides are to be seen. On the one hand, memory research suggests that items are retrieved much in the same way they were stored, unless they are frequent enough to have turned into 'neuter' items, i.e., [items] no longer episode- bound, context-bound, process-level-bound,[inner state-/mood-bound], etc. (*) It is as if due to the different ways of getting in , the 'system' gets provided with different ways of letting out. And, on the other hand, psycholinguistic models depict the access and selection of meanings which subsequently are output dressed in phonological and/or ortographic forms.

As to the applied linguistic borrowings, one chief point has to do with a discussion of issues regarding the instruction of vocabulary to foreigners, such as 'cross-linguistic similarity' (Ringbom, 1987) related to 'potential vocabulary', that is, the words which probably would fit best the learner's linguistic predispositions and therefore would be more easily learnt at [the] initial stages of his/her [competence] interlanguage --cognates, borrowings([either]between L1 and the target language, or from a third language [, such] as Latin in relation to English and Portuguese), international loanwords ([viz.,] hotel, taxi, radio, TV, bar, cinema, cafe, etc. etc.), word-for-word translation equivalent items (particularly concrete nouns). Other points include 'useful vocabulary' [('strategic vocab.', 'basic vocab.', etc.)] for general purposes--core vocabulary (frequent words) and high-degree of coverage items (general nouns, etc.), etc.

[Summing up. The topic I want to work at relates the acquisition of vocabulary with language teaching materials. The aimed result of vocabulary acquisition is lexical competence as part of general communicative competence, so that the higher the lexical competence, the better it will be for a person's general adaption. Lexical knowledge, as any kind of knowldge, has much to do with

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(*) Interestingly, this has bearings on high-frequency words (function words, etc.) as well as on information theories which state that informativeness lies in the unusualness of a given item.

memory, specifically with the mental lexicon. The way memory is organized and works is important to/affects the acquisitional process. Currently adopted learning theories' and language teaching approaches' assumptions and claims may be consistent with the working hypothesis of memory related to the acquisition of lexis or not. Some particular areas of the lexis in the target language may be more useful for learners aiming at general purposes, or easier to be acquired by learners with certain linguistic background, for instance, Brazilian students who are learning English. Language teaching materials presumably have a significant role in the language learning experience of foreigners.. So, I believe it is reasonable to question whether the materials design is in accordance with the interdisciplinary theoretical platform. Or to put it the other way round: What should materials be like in order to help students' attainment of lexical knowledge?/facilitate the students' acquisition of lexical knowledge?]

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METHODOLOGY

Based on the pertinent aspects of memory and particularly of the mental lexicon bearing on the acquisition of vocabulary as well as on suggestions proposed by studies of applied linguistics concerned with vocabulary learning/instruction, I intend to list the desirable features of an ideal textbook. Against this [sort of]checklist, actual materials will be contrasted.

Selection. Although I do not think of assessing the efficacy of coursebooks in terms of the actual amount of learning they effectively promote (this would require an experimental work [what is far] beyond the scope of [this] the project), I intend to select the materials used in the English courses [in UFSC] of the UFSC (Letras course - Interactions; Extracurricular - Opening Strategies; and Fala Brasil, a textbook designed for foreign learners of Brazilian Portuguese). [However,] Due to reasons of feasibility owing to a better control of [the new lexical items introduced] the new incoming lexical items in each teaching unit, the focus will be primarily on the initial developmental stages - beginners and lower intermediate. Aiming at the construction of a base for comparisons, materials deliberately designed to instruct vocabulary might as well be selected, e.g. The Words You Need (Rudzka et al, 1981) and [possibly] the lexical syllabus developed as part of the COBUILD Project at the University of Birmingham.

Analysis. Based on the models of the mental lexicon and memory processes together with the points taken from applied linguistics, materials will be examined and checked on some specific aspects [. For instance,] , for instance, those proposed by Gairns and Redman (1986: 171 ff) relative to whether the vocabulary selection has been statistically supported or purely grounded on [ ] the authors intuitions; whether the organization of vocabulary presents items in such a way as to facilitate the learners' tasks -- appropriate amount in each unit, information about the meaning, style, connotation, pronunciation, etc.; whether the learner is provided with vocabulary learning strategies, with items for productive use, with opportunities for contextual guesswork or for skillful use of dictionaries, with information about word-building procedures, etc.; whether there are chances to recycle the new items in different skill activities or to revise and expand; whether there are homework activities to consolidate learning; whether there are visuals associated to meanings; etc.

Classification. After the analysis of the materials, it is expected that they will fall into three logically possible categories. The first one will include those books whose authors have considered vocabulary learning as an automatic by-product resulting from the work on syntactic structures and/or reading [per se] per se. I presume it is no longer easy to find current instances of this kind, nevertheless a class of neglectful materials is predictable de jure. A second group would include [those] the materials showing a clear concern with vocabulary instruction, although not in connection with the assumptions and findings put forward by the studies and research reports I will resort to. And finally, the most interesting class of coursebooks, which conversely is consistent with the studies outcomes.

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PROBABLE CONTENTS

Introduction
  The problem
  The objectives
Review of the relevant literature
  Structure and functioning of the human memory
  [content, processes, and structure of the human memory]
  Structure and functioning of the mental lexicon
    Memory and mental lexicon: working definitions and hypotheses
  Applied [Linguistics] linguistic issues
    'Potential vocabulary','useful vocabulary', and lexical competence
    Aspects of learning theories
    Aspects of language teaching approaches
    A tentative checklist of [desirable] vocabulary features in textbooks
Language materials
  Description and analysis of the materials
  Discussion
Conclusions [Pedagogical implications]

[An attempt to bridge psycholinguistic studies with practical issues related to language- teaching materials design and vocabulary learning (4.2.91)]

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Appendix 2

A selection of instances of **learning strategies** in relation to vocabulary acquisition is presented here. They were all taken from Bazzo (1983).(*)

> P - Hum ... I think it is ... (pause to think) in your (gestures - mime)
> H - pocket?
> P - pocket? Yes. (laughs - signs of satisfaction) (p. 118)

(*) **Te** stands for Teacher. **P, A, Ta, H, R, S**, name the subjects who took part in the experiment. **Ev** refers to everybody.

P - Hum ... I do know to say in English ...
Te - Try to explain ...
P - A thing that you use when you are going to smoke. Hum ... to put fire ...
Te - Ya. That's OK -- fire -- matches.
Ev - Matches
Te - A box of matches. (Appendix, p. 1)

A - Well we use to, a pen and a pencil, to write and a ruler to ...
P - To make lines ...
A - To make lines and the eraser to ...
P - I don't know how to say.
Te - To erase, of course! (smiles) (App., p. 8)

P - To draw? No ... is How would you say?
Te - Yes, to draw.
P - Draw?
Te - Yes, to make figures. Or ... (App., p. 8)

Ta - It's near the apple, it's longer, we use to ... to ...
P - To eat?
Ta - To help to eat.
A - The knife? (he pronounced [k n a I f] and nobody showed any surrprise).
P - Knife. (correctly)
S - Knife. (correctly) (App., p. 12)

A - I take two black rods and two blue rods and ... (long pause)
Te - Help him! You help him.
P - I don't know how to say.
A - I joined the (pause)
P - Ends?
A - The extremes.
Te - OK. Go on.
A - I joined the extremes of the ... of the each one and I form ... form?
Te - Hum, hum.
A - A ...
P - I don't know how to say.
Ta - Square?
Ev - Square!
Te - OK! OK! Very good. Another one. For instance: I took two brown rods ... long ... long brown rods, and two small white rods. I put the two white rods between the two long brown rods.
You can move any kind of figure. The problem is to describe.
Another one.
P - I do ... I take two long orange rods and a brown rod. And I joined? No! I put them with the ... the extre ... the extreme ... no ... How to say ...
Te - You can say ends Ends. It is easier than extremities ... Ends .

P - Ends. And in the middle I put the little white rod.
Te - OK. So you made a kind of ... Square?
Ev - No ...
A - Triangle?
Te - Speak louder!
A - Triangle (with a wrong pronunciation).
Te - OK. Good. Another one (...) (App., p. 13-4)

H - Here are the bathroom, (many laughs) and the garage. (Inaudible) (many laughs). Last week, I took my shower and was went a party. I ... I ... help me! I go to my, to my ... to my ...
P - Bedroom.
R - I go to my bedroom, and I put the ... beautiful clot ...
P - Clauth ...
R - Clothes
I went (laughs) ... I went to the garage and I ... I ...
Ta - Took the car?!
R - I took my motorcycle. (...) (App., p.22)

Ta - Clock? Where?
R - In the middle.
A - On the wall?
H - Hum?!
A - On the wall?
H - On the wall ... (He seems to be confused with the question -- on the wall).
(A long pause)
A - On the floor? ... (laughs)
H - Not on the floor.
A - On the wall?
H - Wall?
A - On the wall?
Ta - Near the picture.
H - Yes, near. On the picture.
A - OK. (App., p. 36)

R - Where is?
Ta - On ... on ...
R - On ... on the middle?
Te - You have the information (many laughs).
Ta - I don't know ... You are (inaudible) is the picture.
R - We have three pictures: one in the middle; (laughs) one beside, in the right; one beside, in the left.
Ta - OK. I understand. (App., p. 37)

H - In front of the sofa, near the box and the glass of (hesitation)
R - Fruit ...
H - Fruit juice (some inaudible words)

I don't know.
R - The object (inaudible) (many laughs)
H - What's the name of vaso?
Ta - Yes.
H - I don't know what's the name.
Te - How to say in English?
Ta - Vase.
S - Vase.
R - The vase in on the 'armário'. (Laughs)
H - Armary?
Te - Say what you think.
Ta - Where? Where? (Silence)
Te - Remember?
R - (Inaudible)
Te - Shelf.
R - Shelf?
Te - Shelf. (App., p. 38)

P - Excuse-me. My picture in my ...
Te - Card.
P - In my card are different than the card (App., p. 40)

Ta - I don't know where I put a man who has a moustache and a ... goat? [G t]
A - Goaty beard?
Ta - Yes. (App., p. 44)

A - She is using ring, I don't know. How do you say ...
P - Necklaces?
A - Oh, yes. No, no, yes, necklaces. And a blouse. She (...) (App., p. 46)

Te - What would you say is her, well, noticeable feature? If you look at her which can be said to be her noticeable feature?
P - She's very ... how can I say? (hesitation) Er ... How can I say?
Te - What do you think, S? What in her attracts you more?
(Silence)
P - How can I say, when a person, everybody likes her or she's ... ah!
... How can I say?
T - Nice?
P - Nice?!
Te - Friendly ... her friendly smile ...
P - Friendly ... I think she is a ... my opinion ... she has a friendly expression in her eyes.
Te - Hum, hum (Yes) The ... (hesitation)
P - The form, form? No. How you say? Form that she laughs?
Te - The way she laughs?
P - The way.
Te - The way she smiles.
P - Hum, hum (Yes)

Te - Yes. Anybody else? Don't you have any opinion about her?
H - She has a fair complexion?
Te - Yes. (...) (App., p. 47)

P - (Inaudible) How can I say? Vera tell us about ...
Te - About what?
P - About the hair. Er ... It is very ... How can I say?
Ta - Short
P - No. When it is not assim (Laughs)
A - Straight? (Strait)
P - I don't know.
A/Ta - Straight? (With the same pronunciation)
S - Straight (idem)
Te - Yes. Straight (with the right pronunciation)
Ev - Straight.
Te - Straight hair. It's now wavy.
Ta - OK. (Everybody repeats straight) (App., p. 48)

Ta - A girl, a young girl, has a big hair.
H - A punky hair. (Many laughs)
Ta - OK.
Te - What?
H - Punk. In England they have ...
Te - OK. (...) (App., p. 48)

H - He doesn't have hair.
P - I dont't know ...
Te - OK, repeat: bald man.
Ev - Bald man.
Te - Repeat: bald.
Ev - Bald.
Te - OK. Number twelve. The last one.
Ta/P - (Inaudible) A man who has a goat ...
Te - A goatee-beard?
Ev - Goatee-beard. (App., p. 49)

P - (...) There is a picture on the wall and, he, Ai! I forgot! You tell us in other class ... A man who doesn't have hair.
H - Bald man?
A - Bald man?
Ev - Bald man.
P - Yes (...) (App., p. 49)

H - Yes. (Inaudible) and I have his wife. She is read the journal
P - The journal! (She laughs)
H - Oh! I have the french ... (He also studies French)

Te - There is a word in English --journal-- It's more scientific ... Journal of Medicine ... but this kind is a newspaper.
H - A newspaper, yes. (App., p.50)

R - No, er ... What colour is your ... your
Ev - Sweater
R - Your
Ev - Sweater
R - Sweater (...) (App., p. 54-5)

P - And when he is going to sleep, the telephone (laughs) ring?
Te - Ring?
P - Hum - hum (...) his best friend invites him to (...) he's not tired. He is very happy (...) he says that he is going to (...) (App., p. 56)

A - No, no. She's, he's, the man is smoking, he's thinking about something. And she's sitting on the sofa on a, I think it's a ...
How do you say? a ... that room that we got to ...
P - Living-room.
A - Living-room, living-room. And the other picture I have the same man, she, he is with a, a hat and he is using ...
P - A smoking? Oh! I don't know how I'd say ...
A - Er it's a ... not a jacket. It's a jacket, but it's long.
H - Suit?
A - Suit, not.
P - No, no, it's not suit. I know how to say.
A - When it's cold we use this, this
P - A rain ...
H - A raincoat?
A - Yes ...
H - Raincoat.
A - And she is, she is in a, she is in a, I think she is in a, in a ... shop?
H - Shopping-center.
Te - Yes.
A- Shop? In a shop she is buying (...) (App., p. 56-7)

P - I continue. One picture is a man, he is er decor ... decoring, decoring ...
Te - Decorating.
P - Decorating. Decorating a room. I think it is the dining-room. I'm not sure. (...) (App., p. 57)

A - Er, he's sitting on the sofa, smoking a cigarette, and he's ... How do you say preocupado?
Te - Worried.
A - Worried, worried. He's worried with something. (...) (App., p. 59)

Appendix 3

The following cascade of eighteen **quotations** is made out of paragraphs taken from works that appeared in the recent history of **vocabulary studies**. They are among those constituting major landmarks in the evolving concern with VA in an FL. Most importantly, they all share a reference to an unbearable situation of neglect in which vocabulary was found to be. Their sequence is chronological.

> [1] (...) linguists characteristically view language as a structured system, and their preoccupation has been almost entirely with those aspects of language whose structure is most susceptible to scientific analysis --phonology and grammar. Linguists have had remarkably little to say about vocabulary and one can find very few studies which could be of any practical interest for language teachers. Reflecting the linguist's concern with grammar and the related view that mastery of a foreign language depends upon complete control of its grammatical rules, we find the methodologist's emphasis on the subordination of vocabulary teaching to grammar teaching. The range of vocabulary, we are told, should be deliberately restricted while grammar is still being acquired so that the learner's powers of acquisition can be concentrated on what is most important. To spend time at this stage learning vocabulary is to be diverted from the true content of language acquisition. Once the pupil knows the many grammatical frames, then to expand the number of words which can operate in the frames is a relatively simple task. It therefore comes later. In practice techniques for vocabulary extension have scarcely been discussed explicitly. Of course any methods of teaching which aim to make use of actual sentences rather than abstract symbols must have a vocabulary content. Commonly, then, the lexical content of the earlier stages of language teaching is consciously limited to what is needed either to service the techniques of presentation and practice or to motivate the learners. I hope this is a fair representation of a *structural* view of language teaching.
>
> However we need not accept the neglect of vocabulary that this has led to. In the first place we can question whether grammar must always dominate vocabulary. Secondly we must acknowledge that there is a tradition of vocabulary study, stemming from what might be called pre-structural days, whose results and techniques have continued to be used and which has not been found contradictory by those who would wish to emphasize the structural aspects of language learning. Thirdly, we can ask just what are the problems of learning vocabulary and attempt to discover any implications for the organization of language teaching. (Wilkins, 1972: 109-10)

> [2] The reverse doctrine --that vocabulary is a relatively minor aspect of language structure-- can be harmful to FL teaching and learning. In part this down-grading of vocabulary by teachers and theoreticians is a reaction against the naive learner's exaggeration of vocabulary learning. In part it is a result of a teacher's enthusiasm for the formal structural facts about a language. FL teachers are --or ought to be-- people who are genuinely fascinated by language as language, grammar as grammar, pronunciation as

phonetic performance. Inevitably such teachers are tempted to share with their pupils the delights of tenses and cases and auxiliaries and word-order and rounded front vowels. And textbook writers are under pressure, from within themselves and from their colleagues, to organize learning materials around structural topics. That means, of course, that they treat vocabulary as just the vehicle for the illustration of grammatical topics rather than as a set of counters with a communicative value in themselves. (Twaddell, 1973: 63)

[3] The teaching and learning of vocabulary has never aroused the same degree of interest within language teaching as have such issues as grammatical competence, contrastive analysis, reading, or writing, which have received considerable attention from scholars and teachers. The apparent neglect of vocabulary reflects the effects of trends in linguistic theory, since within linguistics the word has only recently become a candidate for serious theorizing and model building (Leech 1974 [semantics]; Anthony 1975 [contributions to a theory of lexical meaning]). (Richards, 1976: 77)

[4] The learning and teaching of foreign language vocabulary has lately received little attention from language teaching methodologists. The bulk of theoretical discussions, writings and research has been focused on the teaching of syntactic structures and pronunciation, with especially the functional knowledge of the former being regarded as the key to all success in foreign language acquisition. Vocabulary learning has most often been treated as a problem marginal to other language learning activities since it has been the matter of common belief that the acquisition of foreign lexicon is a by-product of having the learner participate in these other activities. (Marton 1977: 33)

[5] In looking at the way vocabulary has been traditionally taught in English-as-a-Second-Language programs at the university level, two major points emerge. First, vocabulary has been relagated to secondary status in favor of syntax. It is felt that students need to master basic grammatical patterns first to gain both understanding and ability to communicate in English. Learning new words or phrases is often viewed as a hindrance to this task because such study distracts the learner from observing and using the syntactic patterns of the language. Some feel that only after basic syntax is totally mastered can massive vocabulary acquisition begin (Twaddell 1973).

The second point common in theories of vocabulary instruction also demonstrates the secondary status of vocabulary teaching. Vocabulary knowledge is generally not taught as a skill in itself. Rather, most methodologies discuss the indirect teaching of vocabulary as part of wider areas of language learning such as reading or listening comprehension (Chastain 1976; Rivers 1968; and Michel and Patin 1972). Vocabulary instruction is thus seen as a means to an end and not as a goal in itself. What results from these two suppositions should hardly be a surprise. Because vocabulary has received secondary emphasis in the classroom, students, upon leaving the sheltered atmosphere of the ESL classroom, often find themselves at a literal "loss for words" in the uncontrolled English-speaking environment which they encounter in the normal American university. Consequently, the students encounter frustration and even claim that their ESL training was of dubious value since they have great trouble understading and using English in their daily academic and nonacademic endeavors. (Judd, 1978: 72)

> [6] (...) most of the recent work on the psychology of Foreign Language Learning has concentrated on syntactic aspects of acquiring a new language. Hardly anyone has looked at what happens to foreign language words in the early stages of their acquisition, although learners themselves often identify vocabulary as their major problem area. It seems important that this neglect should not be allowed to continue. (Meara 1978: 194)

A reference to Levenston (1979) is obligatory here due to the influence his charge against such state-of-affairs has caused on the community of scholars in the recent history of VA studies. Despite this fact, access to his work has not been possible, unfortunately. Were it otherwise, it is almost certain, however, that a passage of his would have been presented in this part.

> [7] Although the skill of guessing word meanings from context is widely acknowledged as a useful skill there has been little research in this area and very little useful guidance for teachers or learners. (Clarke & Nation 1980: 211)

> [8] Vocabulary acquisition is part of the psychology of second-language learning that has received short shrift from applied linguistics, and has been very largely neglected by recent developments in research. This neglect is all the more striking in that learners themselves readily admit that they experience considerable difficulty with vocabulary, and once they have got over the initial stages of acquiring their second language, most learners identify the acquisition of vocabulary as their greatest single source of problems. (Meara 1980: 221)

> [9] The importance of words in verbal communication hardly needs stressing, yet no other language component has been more neglected in foreign language teaching than the lexicon. (Rudzka et al. 1981: I)

> [10] It has often been remarked how strange it is that comparatively little has been written on the teaching and learning of foreign language vocabulary, because there is a sense in which learning a foreign language is basically a matter of learning the vocabulary of that language. Not being able to find the words you need to express yourself is the most frustrating experience in speaking another language. (Wallace 1982: 9)

> [11] Attention has recently been turned to the problem of vocabulary in foreign language teaching, and a steady growing amount of work is beginning to challenge assumptions that have relegated vocabulary teaching to a secondary position in the priorities of language teaching. However, the teacher of English as a foreign language would be forgiven for holding the view that not much vocabulary teaching goes on at all, especially if it is true that teaching reflects what is in coursebooks. (McCarthy 1984: 12)

> [12] In recent years, vocabulary has not received the recognition it deserves in the classroom. (Gairns & Redman 1986: 1)

[13] 1. *Neglect of lexis in second language acquisition research*

1.1 *Evidence from the literature*

No language acquisition[1], whether first, second, or foreign; child, or adult, can take place without the acquisition of lexis. Sound patterns of a language which do not form a lexical item are no more than meaningless noise; grammatical rules in themselves, unless they relate particular sounds to particular meanings, are only interesting abstractions with insufficient communicative value.

If then, the learning of vocabulary lies at the heart of language learning, it would be reasonable to assume that language acquisition studies should devote no less escope and effort to vocabulary than to phonology or grammar. However, until very recently, the reality has pointed to the contrary. [...] (Laufer 1986: 69)

[14] There are very few books or studies of lexis in relation to applied linguistics (Carter 1987: XVII)... In all three domains [language learning and teaching, lexicography of learners' dictionaries, and stylistic analysis of literature] vocabulary is of particular relevance and has not received as much attention as it merits. (p. XVIII) ... Vocabulary and vocabulary use are now beginning to attract the attention of applied linguists after a period of relative neglect. (p. XVIII)

[15] One of the chief objectives of Applied Linguistics and Language Study series is to offer books across the range of topics in language pedagogy, focusing research on issues which arise from educational practice. When one looks at the array of books presently available in the series it strikes one as surprising that we have not until now identified vocabulary as one such key topic. (Candlin: Preface for Carter & McCarthy 1988: VII)

[16] Vocabulary teaching has a long history, and applied linguistics and language teachers are only just beginning to turn their attention to it again after a couple of decades or so of relative neglect. (Carter & McCarthy 1988: XII) ... Throughout the book we claim that vocabulary study has been neglected by linguists, applied linguists and language teachers. We believe that we are justified in claiming this. Although interest has grown quite rapidily during the 1980s, there is certainly not much evidence of interest in vocabulary in the last twenty-five years taken as a whole and relative to investigation at other linguistic levels. (p. 1)

[17] Following a period of neglect which led Levenston to claim that studies of lexical acquisition had been 'discriminated against' (1979) there is renewed interest in the role of lexis in language learning and teaching [...]. Underlying this renewed interest in lexical acquisition is a complementary shift in emphasis in current theoretical descriptions of language structure. (Robinson 1990: 273)

[18] Over recent decades, it was generally upheld that a FL learner did not need more than 2000 or 3000 words in order to be able to function in a FL with the consequence that little attention was paid to vocabulary learning. (Kelly 1990: 199)

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[1] I think it is not senseless to refer here also to works that, although they only appear in my text in a rather indirect way, are nonetheless essential not only to a full understanding of the point at issue, but mostly because of the fact that this is basically an exploratory research, therefore pertinent bibliography is an integral part of the 'findings'.

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LIST OF VERY USED/USEFUL ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AL:	applied linguistic(s)
CogPsy:	cognitive psychology
DK:	declarative knowledge
FE:	fixed expression
FL:	foreign language
ID:	individual differences
Info:	information
K:	knowledge
LexC:	lexical competence
LexK:	lexical knowledge
LexProf:	lexical proficiency
Ling:	linguistic(s)
L1:	language one; first language
L2:	language two; second language
NS:	native speaker(s)
PGI:	pós-graduação de inglês
PK:	procedural knowledge
PsyL:	psycholinguistic(s)
TL:	target language
UFSC:	Universidade Federal de SC
UG:	Universal Grammar
V:	vocabulary
VA:	vocabulary acquisition
VK:	vocabulary knowledge
VL:	vocabulary learning
VocAbil:	vocabulary ability
VT:	vocabulary teaching
VU:	vocabulary use